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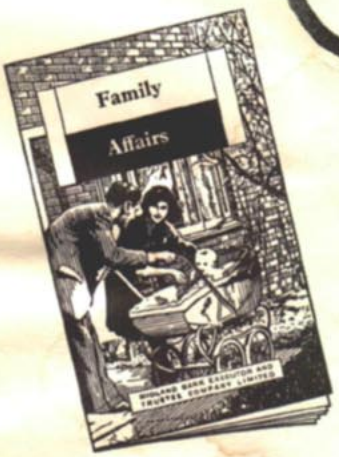

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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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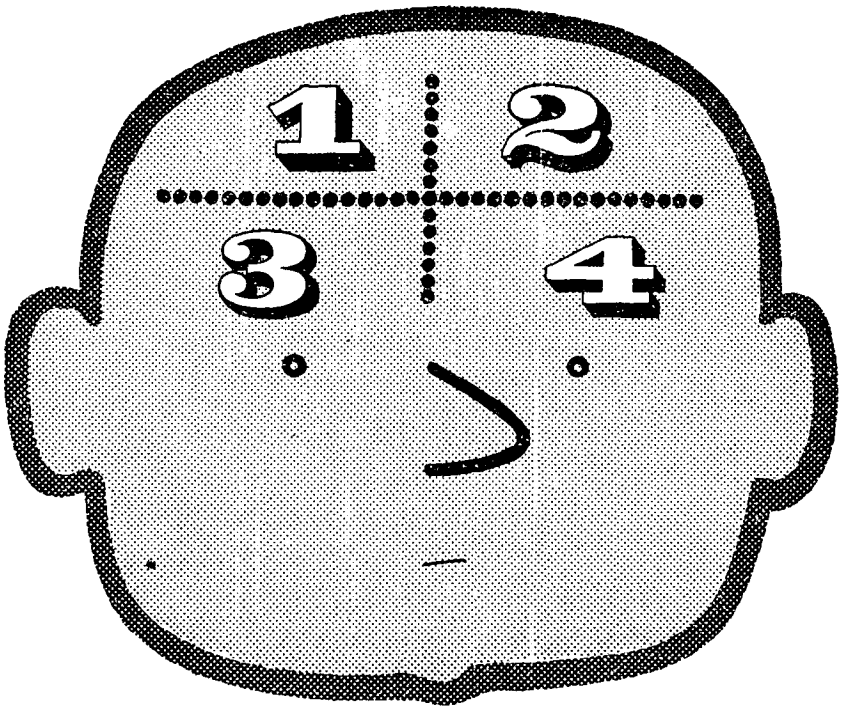

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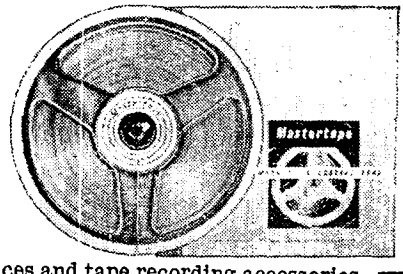

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EDITORIAL NOTE

WE GO TO PRESS this month with the sinking feeling that the European train has gone off the track of history. In the wreckage far more than our own little editorial plans lie twisted and tangled. What point mourning for a sad last instalment of our symposium when Prime Ministers and Presidents are talking funereally of "the tragedy of a Continent"? Why regret the attempt of our correspondents in Paris and Bonn to be so objectively fair and generous about those two malefic witch-doctors when the public opinions of whole nations have roused themselves against the betrayal of the new fraternal ideals of an open international society?

Raymond Aron—whose article in this issue was written, except for the postscript, before the fateful mid-January press conference of General de Gaulle (*"L'Europe—c'est moi..."*)—published in these pages some three years ago a "Letter to an English Friend," in which he pleaded: "We are all involved in the same adventure. Atlantic solidarity seems no less vital to us than European unity.... We ask you to make your choice. Join the Common Market.... Do not be half-a-century behind the times. Let the old Continent seek its future beyond the frontiers of nationalism." This, or so Jean Monnet made it seem to us, was the voice of France and the new authentic tones of a modern European generation which would never allow a relapse into the old shabby habits of nationalist power-politics and chauvinistic prejudice. All the ancient societies of Europe have "peculiar traditions," compounded of their history, their geography, their language and culture. All had, in one epoch or another, been vicious, perfidious, demented or diseased. But had not the time come when the nations could live with each other's virtues, not each other's vices? Each had reason enough, if it was the past in which one wanted to live, for suspicion, *ressentiment*, even hate. But given the present-day dangers of war and terror—and given the good prospects of growth and prosperity—how much more reason to co-operate in a new supra-national community? As one historian replying to our GOING INTO EUROPE enquiry has put it, "We have the choice between uniting politically on a world-wide scale or committing mass suicide. Any breach in the hateful partition walls erected by nationalism is welcome. Any move on the part of the West European peoples to subordinate their national sovereignty to some wider union is, for me, a victory of the human race...."

IT WAS NOT TO BE (or at least, not yet). Neither reason nor vision prevailed. In one stupefying outburst of atavism, we have been pressed back into the antiquated past, where two tribal chieftains—the *Gaulois* enthralled by the folly of grandeur, the *Germain* enveloped in guilt-ridden good-will—conspire to divert us from the future. Their alliance, staged in a Paris glittering with cynicism, is a trick and a fiction. For the first time since the War there has been an international ingathering of democratic forces, and this old world of two old men will not prevail. Its Gaullist theory is a personal aberration, its impulse a political eccentricity, its spirit an unreal and untenable patchwork of outmoded sentiments. What is hopeful is the persistence of the makers of the new Europe, the *avant-garde* of the Atlantic community. A political movement does not dissolve when it meets a set-back, nor do revolutionaries resign when a rising fails. The new and youthful forces in the West will re-group themselves, and possibly even gain in strength now that at last a "European emotion" has been created, now that "angry younger men" are emerging everywhere on behalf of a true cause. The rebelliousness of to-day will prove more serviceable than the quiet piety of yesterday. We do not despair.

M. J. L.

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Raymond Aron

The Gaullist Republic

Letter from Paris

THE GAULLIST REPUBLIC continues. Ever since 1944, General de Gaulle aspired to exercise absolute power in certain fields without abolishing political parties or parliamentary institutions. These ambitions might seem to be contradictory, and indeed for a long time they were. Now, after the referendum and the elections of 1962, they have been reconciled. In 1944–45, *le Libérateur* was accepted, but also secretly opposed, by all parties—not one of them, not even the one which claimed to be the *parti de la fidelité*, would have agreed to a constitution such as we have today. The unanimity of support apparently enjoyed by the General diminished his freedom of action.

As head of a government in which the three big parties were represented, General de Gaulle finally decided to resign. Unable to obtain the authority which alone seemed worthy of him (or, if one prefers, essential to him) he could not be content either to be a *chef de gouvernement* who negotiates with rival groups and interests or, even less, a *chef de l'Etat* who unveils war memorials and receives foreign dignitaries.

On the other hand, it is hard to explain why he did not fight openly against the first Constitution (which was rejected without his intervention) but did oppose the second. Whatever the reasons or the accidents which brought about the ruptures between General de Gaulle and the M.R.P., the General, after the Constitution of the Fourth Republic had come into force, had a choice between three attitudes: either to resign himself to permanent retirement—or to await the "shock" of history—or to do his best to sabotage the Fourth Republic in order to make his recall inevitable.

He never resigned himself to retirement. Between 1947 and 1953 he sought to influence events through the *Rassemblement du Peuple Français* (R.P.F.) while awaiting the inevitable crisis. The R.P.F. collapsed in 1951, through a piece of electoral trickery combined with an inadequate Gaullist vote.

By 1951, the Gaullist wave of 1948–49 had already spent itself. Post-war reconstruction had been completed, economic progress was already in its stride, the Atlantic Pact had been signed, and the European Coal-Steel merger negotiated. The Communist Party was no longer a threat, and all the indications were that far fewer Frenchmen now wanted the leader of "Free France" to return to power.

The failure of the R.P.F. could be explained in two ways, not mutually exclusive. First of all, circumstances were not sufficiently critical either for the mass of Frenchmen to feel the need of a *Sauveur* or, still less, for the politicians to agree to stand down in favour of a national leader. Secondly, as President of the R.P.F., General de Gaulle blurred the image which he himself wished to preserve, of himself as the embodiment of legitimacy.

In the last analysis, the R.P.F. died of the contradiction between the two roles which the General wished to play simultaneously, that of national hero and that of partisan leader. True, the contradiction did not exist for the General himself, since his party called itself a *rassemblement* ("rally") and its main objective was a revision of the Constitution which would allow the President of the R.P.F. to become President of the Republic and the symbol of French destiny. But in the eyes of the French people, only an historical crisis could eliminate the contradiction between the most illustrious Frenchman and the leader of a revisionist party.

THE CRISIS came between 1956 and 1958. The R.P.F. threat had disappeared and

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apparentements had been less numerous. The Communists had won 150 seats instead of 100: some 14 per cent of the electorate had voted for the most sordid party to have arisen in Western Europe since the second world war. The Algerian war divided both the country and the parties. While the General himself remained wrapped in a silence broken only by cryptic pronouncements, some of his followers agitated against the "system," raved about *"Algérie Française,"* and plotted with the military. In May, 1958, General de Gaulle returned to power as defender of the Republic, under the shock of a military rebellion which many of his followers had encouraged (which he himself had not been unaware of and perhaps had manœuvred), and which he was not to repudiate until four years later, in 1962, when he found himself engaged in a twin struggle against the O.A.S. and the ghost of the Fourth Republic.

Thus, in May, 1958, events at last brought about the reconciliation between the *Libérateur* and the *Réformateur*. The parties granted him what they had refused in 1945: the right to draft a constitution in conformity with his own wishes, in other words setting up a supreme guide without eliminating parliamentary institutions. Thus, from 1958 to 1962, General de Gaulle was able to govern as he likes governing: absolute master of the essential areas of government, contemptuous of all the "bickering, snarling, and back-biting" of the politicians, liberal towards his critics, indifferent about prosaic workaday questions. But while he succeeded in restoring the currency, and affirmed the lofty independence of French diplomacy *vis-à-vis* France's allies, he was compelled to devote his most spectacular efforts to the liquidation of the Algerian tragedy.

THREE TIMES (the barricades in January, 1960, the Generals' revolt of April, 1961, and the O.A.S. campaign) General de Gaulle was challenged by those who had helped to bring him back to power. Certain of the conspirators of May, 1958, certain members of the U.N.R. put *Algérie Française* above their Gaullism and above republican legality. But the vast majority of Frenchmen and Gaullists followed their guide.

At the elections which followed the ratification of the Constitution, the party which had been improvised to uphold the General's policies achieved a success which surprised both itself and the experts. Many voters wished to reaffirm their allegiance to the new régime and its leader by giving their votes to the candidates who were first and foremost devoted followers of General de Gaulle. Still, in 1958 it was not necessary to "vote U.N.R." in order to "vote Gaullist." At any rate, there was no suggestion of anti-Gaullism in the votes in favour of the Independents, the M.R.P., or even the Socialists, since all these parties accepted, at least provisionally, the régime dominated by General de Gaulle.

What happened at the referendum and the elections of 1962? Historians will probably have a choice between two versions. According to the Gaullists, the parties of the *système* willingly handed over to General de Gaulle the responsibility for war or peace in Algeria. Once peace had been restored, they sought to rid themselves of the hero, who was now an embarrassment, in order to plunge once more into *"les jeux, les poisons et les délices du système."* But the General managed to forestall the attack by choosing the time and place for the battle. By proposing to the country (through the referendum) the election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage, he forced the parties either to ratify a highly questionable interpretation of Article 11 of the Constitution, or to enter into a struggle which they were unlikely to win (all the more so because many of them did not even want victory, fearing as they did the responsibilities of power if General de Gaulle resigned). By forcing his adversaries into the open, the President of the Republic did in fact increase the electoral efficiency of his own prestige. In 1958, the fewer declared enemies he had (apart from the Communists), the less did the invocation of his name determine the choice of the electorate. In 1962, the more the parties came out openly against the Head of State, the more his charisma transmitted itself, even through the "stagnant waters" of constituencies to the Gaullist candidates. Hence the triumph of the U.N.R.

THE SPOKESMEN of the parties would probably put forward only one objection to this version. "*We* didn't want a brawl," they would say. "It was the General who tried to destroy us by means of the constitutional referendum. We could not subscribe to the violation of the Constitution. But it's true that in saying *non* we gave the President of the Republic a chance of taking part in the electoral struggle without descending from his throne...." The 1962 operation was an exact reproduction of the R.P.F. affair: the

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national hero committing himself on the side of a party which was not *"un parti comme les autres,"* since it was the party of one man and the Constitution he demanded. This time, the operation was a triumph: 32 per cent of the popular vote as against 20 per cent in 1951. True, the General was in power and not in opposition. To vote U.N.R. in 1962 was to be conservative —in favour of preserving the Gaullist status quo —whereas in 1951 Gaullism was an opposition movement. The Constitution which the R.P.F. sought to introduce in 1951 existed only on paper or in the mind of the legislator; the 1958 Constitution may have been altered and manipulated, but it continues to operate—an absolute and liberal sovereign is elected for seven years; he does not like the parliamentarians but he does not persecute them, and they are well paid for voting laws and not embarrassing the executive.

Whichever interpretation one prefers—General de Gaulle anticipating an inevitable attack or himself taking the offensive in order to extend his power still further and to stabilise his position—the meaning of what happened in the autumn of 1962 is perfectly clear. The semi-defeat of the referendum opened the way for the dazzling victory at the elections. General de Gaulle had to cease being acclaimed by all in order to be able to support his followers in the election without taking part too openly in the battle. Profoundly disappointed after the referendum by the smallness of his majority (less than half the potential electorate), he is said to have contemplated resigning. No one realised at the time the electoral advantage of this semi-failure, which was essential in order that the General should be, in just measure, both the embodiment of the nation and the leader of a party. In 1944, he had been too much the *incarnation de la patrie* to be able to play the political game successfully. In 1951, he had been first and foremost the party leader. In 1962, circumstances and tactics had produced the ideal solution, or, in the Platonic phrase, the perfect mixture.

BARRING unforeseeable accidents, the situation has been provisionally stabilised, and the crisis begun in 1956 (or, if one prefers, in 1946) has been resolved. With the U.N.R. deputies, the Association for the Fifth Republic, and those whose vocation it is to jump on every bandwagon, the President of the Republic has a foolproof majority at his disposal. In 1958, the U.N.R. candidates had two slogans, apart from the General's name: "Out with the old," and *"Algérie Française."* Clearly the French people did not hold it against them that they had given Algeria to the F.L.N. (although the immediate cause of the revolution of 1958 was the suspicion that M. Pflimlin was thus inclined!). The electors did not want to hear any more about Algeria. It was as though they were secretly suffering from a bad conscience either for having fought so long or for having given up the struggle so suddenly.

This time the U.N.R. did not even have the equivalent of the 1958 slogans. To keep General de Gaulle at the Elysée, and to prolong the period of "political stability and economic progress": this was the programme of the victorious party. Its spokesmen are therefore wrong to speak as though the U.N.R. and its parliamentary majority were the equivalent of the Conservative majority in the British parliament or the Democratic majority in the American Congress. As we know, the American parties are not disciplined, and every Senator considers himself in honour bound to vote according to his conscience and not the President's orders. The Conservative Party *is disciplined*, but it is not the emanation of a single man; the chief minister, even if he has the final word, consults his party colleagues and does not attempt to create and maintain an atmosphere of mystery. M. Louis Joxe is said to have learnt that the Sahara would be part of an Algerian Algeria during the course of one of the General's press conferences.

For their part, the parties would be wrong to denounce the vacuity of the U.N.R. programme too vehemently. They themselves were scarcely richer in ideas, or at least the memory of the Fourth Republic made it difficult for their ideas to be taken seriously. (After all, it was the victory of the *front républicain* in 1956 which led France, under the Government of Guy Mollet, to commit itself to all-out war in Algeria.)

BEFORE THE ELECTION, M. Pierre Uri argued convincingly that the pact between the four *"non"* parties was in no way an unnatural alliance and that it was based fair and square on a programme.

> Is [the French people] satisfied that the Government should monopolise the most powerful media of communication? Has it asked itself what has become of the rule of law when the executive takes it upon itself to decide when the

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judiciary has exceeded its powers? Is it aware of the effect of prestige politics on the raising of living standards? Does it believe in the efficacy of the national *force de frappe*? Is it prepared to sacrifice the equivalent of a housing programme for half a million people in order to build a single factory to duplicate British nuclear capacity? Remembering that General de Gaulle was opposed to the Common Market, has it considered the opportunities that would have been missed had he returned to power two years earlier? Does it approve of France's absence from the United Nations, the withdrawal of part of our forces from the Atlantic Organisation, the threat of a reversion to the Europe of the nation state as against the vision and hope that created the European community? . . .

To all of which I would reply that these alternatives, which might have been real issues in the contest between the *cartel des non* and the "unconditional" supporters of the régime, did not in fact become electoral issues and did not determine the popular vote. If one man symbolised the policy of European integration, it was M. Robert Marjolin, Vice-President of the European Commission. His recent electoral defeat hardly indicated that the electorate was susceptible to the arguments of a Eurocrat.

We can leave aside the need for "objective information": the average voter rightly feels that all the parties are firm defenders of it when they are in opposition. We can also leave aside the question of "legality": an official of the Club Jean-Moulin told me amiably the other day that the rising generation was not very susceptible to this kind of preoccupation. (It is always nice as age advances to receive such lessons, although arbitrary rule seems to me to be the oldest thing in the world.) The fact remains that the common programme outlined by M. Uri (aside from a project for educational reform which the U.N.R. is only too willing to adopt as its own) was exclusively concerned with foreign policy. And no electoral battle in France has ever been fought on the field of foreign policy —this time less than ever, since the *cartel de non* cannot but have known that General de Gaulle would not change his foreign policy either in form or substance, and that consequently, if they took their own programme seriously, they must have wanted the General-President to resign.

IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE that the quarrel between Left and Right in economic matters has abated. Whether in the choice between private and public ownership, between state control and the mechanism of the market, the current synthesis in France is acceptable to *all* the national parties. Whether *la droite* or *la gauche* is in power, economic expansion and the raising of living standards proceed much the same, with greater emphasis on financial orthodoxy in one case and on growth and the redistribution of incomes in the other. But the present issues (European integration *vs. l'Europe des patries*, co-operation or non-co-operation with the United Nations) were also ignored during the recent campaign which reflected the customary predilections of the French electorate. The plebiscitary factor had a relatively minor influence on the traditional left-wing vote (from the Radicals to the Communists), but a decisive influence on the "moderate" vote: the supporters of the Independents and (to a lesser extent) the M.R.P. went over to the U.N.R. in large numbers. With a majority voting system, a strong minority in the country obtains a majority in Parliament.

Could the old parties have done anything to prevent this? True, some of the Independents who had not always been inflexibly opposed to the O.A.S. showed a certain cynicism in setting themselves up as defenders of the Republic. And as for the Socialists, the Radicals, and the M.R.P., they remained separated from one another, each wrapped up in its own doctrine, enclosed in its regional citadels, represented by the same men, all equally incapable of appealing to the country in a new way or adapting themselves to the techniques of television.

WHEN ALL THIS has been said, I am tempted, in the face of so much severity towards "the parties of yesterday," to plead extenuating circumstances in their favour. It is true that they did not really fight. But how many of those who were in agreement with their ideas and hostile to those of the President of the Republic really wanted a fight? I know an ardent European who detests *l'Europe des patries* and is passionately in favour of a United States of Europe, who detests the nuclear *force de frappe* and unreservedly supports the Atlantic alliance, an old Republican bitterly critical of the constitutional referendum: he voted ***non*** at the referendum (but advised his family and friends to vote *oui*), and eventually he voted U.N.R. at the elections! In other words, he preferred a Government whose ideas he disagreed with but which was presided over by General de Gaulle to a Government whose ideas he shared but which was

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deprived of the *guide suprême*. If politically sophisticated electors have reached the stage of resolutely placing a person above ideas, can one wonder that millions of ordinary Frenchmen did the same? And how could the parties, even if they had reformed themselves, possibly have succeeded?

FOR SEVERAL YEARS past, left-wing writers and journalists have been scarcely more indulgent towards the Fourth Republic and its parties. One of my left-wing friends voted *oui* out of fear of the O.A.S. (whose futility was strikingly demonstrated in the elections). Another voted *oui* in order to give the left time to revivify itself in opposition. There were plenty of frogs, both left and right, who were looking for a king. I recommend to students of *L'esprit du temps* or the *Zeitgeist* a most intelligent discussion between René Rémond and Maurice Duverger (recently published in *France-Forum*) in which they rehabilitate the Second Empire in the light of the Fifth Republic. Apparently unmoved by the "arbitrary" and "personal" nature of the régime, they are more disposed to emphasise its undoubted merits than to dwell on its ultimately tragic failings.

There is no denying that the post-war Fourth Republic, with its perpetual turmoil, offered a humiliating spectacle to the world, and that the continual inflation crises and adventures such as Suez were the responsibility of the men and the institutions of yesterday. Nevertheless: whether in the field of economic reconstruction, the Atlantic alliance, the reconciliation with Germany, or the Common Market, the Fifth Republic has taken over and developed the legacy of the Fourth. The fact that General de Gaulle (and even more the Gaullists) *opposed* these policies at every stage is more to the credit of the vanquished than the victors.

The two major errors of the Fourth Republic were the wars in Indo-China and Algeria. It is possible (personally I believe it to be so) that if General de Gaulle had remained in power after 1946 he would have carried through the process of *décolonisation* at smaller cost. But this is a hypothesis which will remain forever unproved. In fact, neither the President of the R.P.F. nor the recluse of Colombey ever made any public pronouncement that might have facilitated the task of *décolonisation*. Even if it is politically inevitable, it is not historically just that the Fourth Republic should be blamed both for losing the Empire and for refusing to decolonise, and that the Fifth Republic should be able to claim credit for disengaging. What would have been said if, at the end of seven-and-a-half years of "pacification," a Mollet government had reached an agreement with the F.L.N. and provoked the exodus of 800,000 Frenchmen?

And yet, perhaps it is the final proof of de Gaulle's political genius that he should have won an electoral victory with an Algerian balance-sheet which would have guaranteed the defeat of anyone else.

TO-DAY FRANCE lives under a despotic constitution but in accordance with liberal practice—liberal, as *Le Canard Enchaîné* testifies, but not democratic. Of course, everything depends on the meaning one gives to words. The Gaullist Republic is based on the democratic *idea*, since the head of State has up to now been chosen by a widely-based electoral college and in future will be elected by universal suffrage. But democracy in the industrially developed countries also entails the rule of law, the mediation of parties and parliament between people and government, and the effective limitation of the authority of the executive. In the Gaullist Republic such as it appears four years after the ratification of the 1958 Constitution, none of these conditions of real democracy exists.

It is the President of the Republic and not the Prime Minister who determines and directs policy; the President has also reserved the right to interpret the text of the Constitution, even against all juridical advice. Elected for seven years and responsible to no one, the President of the Republic can dissolve the Assembly, can resort in case of need to Article 16 in order to assume a legal dictatorship, and can submit any constitutional revision to a referendum. Such a Constitution, which preserves an element of parliamentarianism through the fact that the National Assembly retains a right of censure, cannot be compared to the American Constitution. One must go back to the ("underdeveloped") France of the Second Empire or look towards the under-developed countries of to-day to find an equivalent for this "presidentialist" régime. There are many Frenchmen who see this as the political system best adapted to modern industrial society, but such an interpretation requires at least some confirmation from the facts.

Does this Constitution—"mon-archy," in

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Maurras's phrase, *monocratie élective*, in the phrase of to-day—represent the ultimate intentions of General de Gaulle? I find it difficult to answer one way or the other. It seems to me that the General, in this a disciple of Charles Maurras, believes in the necessity of giving one man the supreme responsibility of power. But since the *Zeitgeist* will no longer permit this monarch to be designated by history,[1] he must be designed by means of an election which is the equivalent of a plebiscite.

It is the rest that is in doubt. Does General de Gaulle wish to re-establish a sort of equilibrium between the executive and the legislature by limiting the right which the former has arrogated to itself to submit any and every law to a referendum? Does he wish to protect the National Assembly from the permanent threat of dissolution? Does he want to give the Constitutional Council the same right to pass judgment on the constitutionality of executive acts as is being passed on the acts of the Assembly? In short, having triumphed over the parties and forced the Constitution in order to obtain the election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage, will he now show some regard for legality by resuscitating parliament after having laid it low?

Even if the President of the Republic takes this path—and it is an optimistic assumption—the future of French institutions remains uncertain by the very reason of the fundamental choices gradually made during the past four years. The 1958 Constitution set up a parliamentary régime with two safeguards against ministerial instability, one being the right of dissolution vested in the President of the Republic, the other the set of rules which limited the capacity of the Assembly either to overthrow the Government or to paralyse it. I personally was afraid that these precautions, excessive rather than insufficient, would not outlive the Legislator. But such was not the opinion of our political soothsayers. From right to left they vied with one another in proclaiming that the 1958 Constitution was devoid of merit, and that once de Gaulle had disappeared a return to the Fourth Republic was inevitable. M. Paul Reynaud wanted every ministerial crisis to be followed by general elections (a dangerous recipe because of its rigidity). Professors of law such as Messrs. Vedel and Duverger wanted a move towards a presidential system on the American model, dogmatically insisting that everywhere (in Germany, in Great Britain, and in the United States) the leader of the executive is elected by universal suffrage—which is, at best, a half-truth. For the German Chancellor, the British Prime Minister, and the American President are first of all nominated by their parties before being confirmed by universal suffrage. In the absence of such mediation by the parties, the election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage would be liable to have precisely the opposite effect from that attributed to it by our reformers. Instead of being stabilised and reinforced, the Government would be weakened by the opposition between a President elected by direct suffrage and an Assembly composed of representatives of the parties.

M. Yves Lévy, in one of his remarkable recent articles in defence of the parliamentary system, attributes a major responsibility for the misfortunes of France (and many other countries) to "the separation of powers." Every time the constitution separated executive and legislative powers, he claims, the judgment of events was prompt and severe. Less than a year after the promulgation of the first French Constitution, the king had been deposed and the constitution abrogated. Less than four years after the institution of the Second Republic, it had been replaced by an Empire. The duration of French régimes is in inverse proportion to the degree of separation of powers: the less they were separated, the longer the régimes lasted.

Whatever one's reservations about this piece of historical interpretation, it seems to me to be right on one essential point: the harmonisation of powers, rather than an equilibrium of powers, is the key to the functioning of constitutions. The idea of an equilibrium has two applications in the guarantee of liberty. Socially, the plurality of forces and groups effectively limits the arbitrary power of the majority and guarantees the rights of minorities; and juridically, constitutional rules must compel the rival powers to debate and sometimes to reach agreement before decisions are taken. But inside the organs of Government, harmonisation, thanks to the mediation of political parties, is the supreme requirement.

The obvious objection to this theory is that French elections do not normally produce a

[1] In his own case, as he recalled in his eulogy of René Coty, General de Gaulle regards legitimacy as historic rather than elective.

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parliamentary majority. Those who wish to introduce in France the equivalent of the American system look to a President elected by universal suffrage to express the national will in a way that parliament, for lack of a coherent majority, is incapable of doing. Secondly, they hope that the election of the President by universal suffrage will gradually lead to the formation of a two-party system. Thus they have encouraged the tendency towards a "presidentialist" regime in the illusion that it would be easy to return later to a presidential one.

Of course, everything is possible, even that these critics are right. But the real reason for not being too pessimistic about the future is not so much the modernisation of France as the liquidation of serious problems. The crises of the Third and Fouth Republics were not solely attributable to the weakness of these régimes: de-colonisation was a burdensome task, painful even to the Gaullist Republic. Unless the country's leaders decide to plunge into new adventures with the object of avoiding bourgeois comfort, France will have no commitments that are beyond the capacities of any conceivable régime.

MEANWHILE, the Gaullist Republic, as it is to-day, swarms with contradictions. With a despotic constitution in which the very idea of a legality other than the will of the *guide suprême* has become blurred, either the Assembly consists of a docile majority and parliamentary life declines into a mere puppet show, or the discord between Assembly and Guide leads to a constitutional crisis instead of a ministerial one. Some people foresaw the second of these alternatives which would probably have brought about the resignation of the President of the Republic. The voters chose the first.

In the light of foreign experience, the French Constitution, even if it is presidential and not "presidentialist," seems to me to involve more risks of instability, of unnecessary conflicts, than the Constitution of 1958 (whose ineffectuality was now proclaimed *ad nauseam* by its authors themselves). Yet all the experts would reject out of hand the notion that France, in spite of economic development, more closely resembles Latin America than the United States.

I hope they are not mistaken. I can only hope the struggle for power which is a feature of industrial society as of every other society will develop peacefully, in spite of the bizarre rules to which it is now being subjected.

WITH THE END of the Algerian war and the election of a U.N.R. majority in the National Assembly, a new phase is beginning.

I will not attempt to draw up a balance-sheet in a few lines or a few pages. But it would be unjust not to give due recognition to what has been accomplished. The task of so-called *décolonisation*, in *Afrique du Nord* as well as in *Afrique noire*, has been brought to a successful conclusion. France, which in 1958 was regarded as the sick man of Europe, is now respected. The President of the Republic, if he is not universally loved, is widely admired.

My reservation which the Gaullist absolutists will have no hesitation in condemning, does not arise from stubborn hostility or even, as far as I am capable of judging, from "snarling and back-biting." At the time of the R.P.F., I wanted General de Gaulle to return to power by parliamentary means. What separated me from the Gaullists during the years which preceded the 1958 Revolution was the violence with which some of them (and not the least prominent of them) denounced my liberal views on Algeria. M. Terrenoire was scarcely less virulent at the time of the publication of my *La Tragédie Algérienne* than M. Jacques Soustelle himself. If the Gaullists remained faithful to their ideas, I could only continue to be at odds with them. If, when in power, they did the opposite of what they professed when in opposition, could I help being repelled by this opportunism and time-serving? More than that: when some of them incited Army officers to rebellion, I considered their behaviour criminal.

THE GENERAL'S STYLE, the invocation of a mysterious *légitimité* superior to ordinary *légalité*, the insistence on loyalty to a person rather than to ideas, the conception of the monarch—none of this accords with my temperament or my convictions. In this sense, André Malraux was quite right to remind me, after the publication of an article entitled "Farewell to Gaullism,"[3] that I had never been a Gaullist. I must confess that the vocabulary of *grandeur* tends to make me smile—that the simultaneous insistence on national independence and the creation of Europe seems to me to be contradictory—and that I

[2] See "The Fifth Republic," ENCOUNTER, December 1958; "Letter to an English Friend," June 1960; and "The General and the Tragedy," August 1962.

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could never (as so many others did) have denied the representativeness of the F.L.N. in 1960, and then approved the Evian agreement in 1962.

I have nothing in common with most of those who hate General de Gaulle because of "Free France" or because of Algerian independence. But I confess to being too often irritated by those who acclaim him, when identical policies change meaning according to whether it is their idol or somebody else who is carrying it out.

It may be that the Gaullist Republic will develop a democratic constitution and a democratic system of government. For the moment it is the work of a single man, admittedly a great man. I persist in hoping that France will one day be capable of governing herself otherwise than by unconditional faith in a prince, even if one sometimes rejoices that the "cunning of Reason" could have made a worse choice of the Prince.

POSTSCRIPT:—General de Gaulle's press conferences are works of art but they are also political acts. I myself, believe without being able to prove it, that General de Gaulle himself does not take seriously half the arguments he uses—arguments believed on all sides to express his final convictions, but which are in fact temporary expedients. In his recent press conference, for example, he emphasised the need for a purely national *force de frappe*. Whereupon the loyal local chorus of experts and ignoramuses proclaims that France will obtain, thanks to a few fighter-bombers and a few A-bombs, a security which the gigantic force of the United States cannot give her. But is this really what the General thinks? Perhaps Walter Lippmann is right to suggest that, if General de Gaulle wants to endow France with a nuclear force, it is because he has had *no doubts at all* about American protection. The French force, useless against the Soviet Union, is at least a diplomatic trump-card against the U.S.A. When the action of the French force is "co-ordinated" with that of the allied forces, what French head of state would take, without or against our allies, a decision which would mean the death of the French people?

On the other hand, as far as England's candidature for the Common Market is concerned, General de Gaulle is supported by a section of French opinion; there should be no self-deception about this in London or in Brussels. During the negotiations, and again in the Bahamas, Great Britain seemed more Atlantic than European. The Common Market, if England were to enter to-day together with her EFTA partners, would cease to be what it should be—an economic union advancing towards strict nation-like integration.

But why has de Gaulle deliberately provoked a scandal, when the Nassau agreement could have been discarded gently and diplomatically? The answer will appear in the weeks or months to come; meanwhile what has aroused astonishment, anguish, and fury in circles far wider than de Gaulle's irreconcilable critics, is his calculatedly agressive manner to all comers. NATO is compared to a "satellisation" of France, as if our country had only to stand alone to recover a capacity for action quite beyond our economic and military resources. Great Britain is declared to be "insular" and therefore non-European (was she non-European in 1940?) and invited, after an initial failure in the European examination, to re-apply some years from now when she has made some progress. America's determination to defend Europe is called in question although it is obvious that General de Gaulle firmly counts on it. The President of the Republic speaks as if our five partners had empowered him to speak in their name. There are heart-searchings everywhere, not because the General is hostile to Britain's entry into the Common Market, nor because he wishes to have a few fighter-bombers and A-bombs, but because, applying to world diplomacy the technique which he applied to Algeria, he is concealing his *arrière pensées* and setting everyone else the difficult task of guessing them.

This technique—egoism, pride, aloofness, guile (incomparably described in his *Memoirs*)—has not always shown its superiority to the more usual methods of democratic countries. Granted, for example, that the independence of Algeria was both inevitable and compatible with French interests, did the policy's progress from press conference to press conference really reduce the final cost of rupture to a minimum? I believe the Atlantic alliance to be strong enough to afford the luxury of one such great man, so jealous of his stature and his secrets. But if he should unfortunately find disciples, the alliance would not stand the strain. The Gaullist republic continues, but Gaullist foreign policy now begins.

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Robert Graves & Raphael Patai

Some Hebrew Myths and Legends (II)

Paradise

HAVING FORMED Man from dust, God planted a paradisal garden eastward of Eden and stocked it with trees, whose fruit were blazing jewels: among them the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The river that flowed through Eden afterwards divided into four streams. Pishon waters the Land of Havilah where gold, carbuncle, and onyx are found; Gihon waters Cush; Tigris runs beyond Assyria; and Euphrates is the fourth. God set Adam here, and permitted him to attend the Divine Assembly.

b. After Adam's expulsion, God appointed the Cherubim, also called "the Flame of Whirling Swords", to guard Eden.

c. It is disputed where this terrestrial Paradise lies: whether in a desert, or on the Mountains of God; and whether westward or northward, rather than eastward, of Israel. A certain king of Judah once set himself to discover it. He descended Mount Lebiah, from the summit of which could be heard the sound of whirling swords on the far bank of a river. Having lowered a number of his courtiers into the valley, he told them: "Follow the sound!" But none came back.

d. Eden has seven gates, and the outermost opens from the Cave of Machpelah at Hebron. Adam came upon it while burying Eve's body there. As he dug, a divine fragrance greeted his nostrils. He dug deeper, hoping to regain his lost abode, but a deafening voice cried "Halt!" Adam lies buried in the same cave; his spirit still guards the gate of Eden, through which shines a celestial light. The fragrance of Eden once so pervaded the neighbouring field that Isaac chose it as a place of prayer. For some twenty generations, it also clung to the leather garments which God gave Adam, and which were handed down to his male descendants in the elder line.

Others claim that the outermost gate of Eden opens from Mount Zion.

e. The first man after Adam who entered Paradise alive was Enoch. He saw the Tree of Life, under whose shade God often rests. Its beauty of gold and crimson transcends all other things created; its crown covers the entire garden; and four streams—of milk, honey, wine, and oil—issue from its roots. A choir of three hundred angels tends this Paradise—which some, however, say is situated not on Earth but in the Third Heaven. Isaac, the next man to visit it, studied there three years; and later his son Jacob gained admittance. Yet neither of these recorded what he saw.

f. Moses was taken to Eden by Shamshiel, its guardian angel, who among other wonders showed him seventy jewelled thrones made for the righteous and standing on legs of fine gold, ablaze with sapphires and diamonds. On the largest and costliest sat Father Abraham.

g. After Moses, no mortal was found worthy of Paradise except Rabbi Jehoshua ben Levi, a teacher of exceptional piety, who entered by means of the following ruse. When he grew very old, God commanded the Angel of Death to grant him a dying

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wish. Jehoshua thereupon asked for a view of his appointed place in Paradise, but before they set out, side by side, demanded the Angel's sword—"lest, by some mischance, you may frighten me to death." The Angel handed him the sword and, when they reached Paradise, set Jehoshua astride the boundary wall, saying: "Look down! Yonder is your appointed place."

Jehoshua then leaped from the wall, and though the Angel seized hold of his cloak, trying to haul him back, vowed that he would stay. When God's ministering angels complained to Him: "This man has taken Paradise by storm," He answered: "Go and enquire whether Jehoshua ever broke a vow while in the world; if not, let him likewise be true to this one." They went, enquired, and reported: "He has kept every vow." "Then he shall stay," God pronounced.

The Angel of Death, seeing that he had been outwitted, asked for his stolen sword. This Jehoshua withheld, well aware that the Angel could not enter Paradise. A divine voice then cried: "Restore the sword for his needs!" Jehoshua answered: "Lord, I will do so, if he swears never to draw it when You take a man's soul. Hitherto he has slaughtered his victims like beasts, even children in their mothers' bosoms." The Angel renounced this savage practice, and Jehoshua gave him back the sword.

Thereupon Elijah commanded the righteous: "Make room! Make room!" and Jehoshua, going farther into Paradise, saw God seated among thirteen companies of the righteous. God asked: "Jehoshua ben Levi, have you ever beheld the rainbow?" He answered: "Lord of the Universe, what person of my age has been refused this great sight?" God smiled and said: "Are you not Jehoshua ben Levi?" For while a single truly pious man is alive on earth, the Rainbow no longer needs to remind God of His promise, made in Noah's day, that he would never again flood the whole world as a punishment of its wickedness. God knew that Jehoshua, not having seen a rainbow in all his life, had evaded this question to avoid the sin of presumption.

The Angel of Death then lodged a complaint against Jehoshua with the sage Gamaliel. Gamaliel said: "Jehoshua did well! Now go back and tell him to survey Eden and its treasure-houses, and make a report for me. Especially I wish to know whether there are Gentiles in Paradise, and whether there are Children of Israel in Hell."

This mission the Angel of Death carried out; and Jehoshua reported to Gamaliel as follows: "Paradise has seven gates, each leading to the next. The First House, facing the entrance, holds converts who came to God of their own free-will. Its walls are crystal, its beams cedar, and Obadiah the righteous prophet rules over it.

"The Second House is similarly built, and holds the penitents of Israel. Menasseh ben Hizkiyahu rules over it.

"The Third House is of silver and gold. There grows the Tree of Life, under whose shade sit Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs of the twelve tribes, all those Israelites who went out of Egypt, and the whole generation of the Wilderness; also King David, his son Solomon, and all the kings of Judah—except Manasseh, who lies in Hell. Moses and Aaron guard this house, which contains fine silver vessels, costly oils, couches, stools, canopies, and candelabra of gold, pearls, and precious stones.

"When I asked: 'For whom are these preserved?' King David answered: 'For the righteous of Israel, dwelling in the world whence you came.' And when I asked again: 'Are any of Esau's descendants here?' he answered: 'No, for if one such performs a good deed, God rewards him while he yet lives, but at the end he inherits Hell; whereas among the Children of Israel, every man receives his punishment while he yet lives, but afterwards wins a place in Paradise—unless he causes Israel to sin, as did King Manasseh.'

"The Fourth House is built of gold, its beams are olive wood, and holds the righteous whose lives were bitter as the unripe olive.

"The Fifth House, through which Gihon flows, is built of silver, crystal, pure gold, and glass. Its beams are gold and silver, and

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the fragrance of Lebanon pervades every hall. Here I saw silver and golden couches, sweet spices, with red and purple cloths woven by Eve; also scarlet yarn, and goat's hair braided by angels; and here dwell the Messiah, son of David, and Elijah. When the Messiah asked me: 'How do the Children of Israel spend their time in the world whence you come?' I replied: 'In hourly preparation for your coming.' At this he wept.

"The Sixth House holds those who have died while performing their duty to God.

"The Seventh House holds those who have died of grief after observing Israel's sins."

h. Some say that the inhabitants of Paradise stand on their heads and walk on their hands; as do all the dead. If a sorcerer summons a dead spirit by conjuration, it always appears upside-down; unless summoned by order of a king—as the witch of En-Dor summoned Samuel at Saul's demand—whereupon it stands on its feet to show respect for royalty.

i. When Adam was expelled from Eden, God let him take away certain spices, namely saffron, nard, sweet calamus, and cinnamon; also a few Paradisal seeds and cuttings of fruit trees, for his own use.

Moses built the Tabernacle with wood fetched by Adam out of Paradise.

*

1. For the origin of the Paradise concept common to Europe, the Orient, Central and North America, and Polynesia—see "The Fall of Man."

2. Adam's terrestrial Paradise, the Garden of Eden, was speculatively located first on the "Mountain of God", Mount Saphon in Syria; next at Hebron, once the most fertile valley of Southern Palestine and famous for its oracular shrine; then at Jerusalem, after King David had moved his capital there from Hebron; and during the Babylonian captivity, at the head of the Persian Gulf—a delta watered by four main streams: Tigris, Euphrates, Choaspes, and the Pallakopas Canal. The wording *Genesis* ii. 8, God "planted a garden eastward *in* Eden," and 10, "a river went out of Eden to water the garden," made for geographical confusion. Some understood "Eden" as the central part of the garden; others as the region enclosing the garden. Further confusion persuaded some Babylonian Jews to identify Eden with Beth Eden (*Amos* 1.5; *Ezekiel* xxvii. 23), the Bit Adini of Assyrian inscriptions, which flourished in the 10th and 9th centuries B.C. Beth Eden lay in Armenia, the presumed source not only of the Tigris and Euphrates, but of the Nile—Alexander the Great held this view—and of the Orontes, which is the main river of Northern Syria (perhaps Havilah), as the Nile is of Egypt (Cush). Josephus and the Septuagint (*Jeremiah* ii. 18) equate the Gihon with the Nile. Some read Havilah as Central Arabia, though it lacks rivers; since Havilah appears in *Genesis* x. 7 as a son of Cush and a descendant of them through Joktan.

3. Homer makes the same association of Paradise with rewards and punishments in the *Odyssey* (iv. 561), describing the Elysian Fields and "the verge of the world where fair-haired Rhadamanthus rules, and life is easiest for man; no snow falls there, nor any violent storms, nor rain at any time, but Oceanus ever sends forth the clear, shrill blast of the West Wind to refresh mankind." Rhadamanthus was one of the Infernal Judges. According to Josephus, the Essenes of the Dead Sea coast also believed that after death the righteous went to a Western region where they were untroubled by rain, frost, or heat, but enjoyed continuous cool sea breezes. The wicked, however, were confined to a dark, chilly Hell, and there suffered endless punishment—as in the Greek Tartarus.

For the absence of all Esau's descendants from Paradise, see "The Bartered Birthright".

4. "Mount Lebiah" means "Mountain of the Lioness". Its location is unknown. The two cherubim who guarded Eden with their whirling swords were probably swastikas (fire-wheels) painted on the gate as a warning to mankind that the garden lay under taboo.

5. Jehoshua ben Levi was head of the Lydda Rabbinic School during the early 3rd century A.D., and hero of many edifying anecdotes.

6. The upside-down appearance of the dead is probably deduced from a view that ghosts assume a pre-natal posture in hope of re-birth.

7. A reference to what seems an older version of the *Genesis* Paradise myth occurs in *Job* iv. 7–8:

> *Art thou the first man that was born?*
> *Wast thou brought forth before the hills?*
> *Dost thou hearken in the council of Eloah?*
> *And hast thou stolen wisdom for thyself?*

According to this passage, Adam was born before the hills were formed, attended the Divine Assembly and, ambitious for still greater glory, stole wisdom—thereby doing of his own accord what, in the *Genesis* version, Eve and the subtle Serpent persuaded him to do. His theft recalls the Greek myth of the Titan Prometheus who

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stole fire from heaven as a gift for mankind, whom he himself had created, and suffered fearful punishment at the hands of Almighty Zeus.

Samael's Rebellion

SOME SAY that the Serpent of Eden was Satan in disguise: namely the Archangel Samael. He rebelled on the Sixth Day, driven by an overwhelming jealousy of Adam, whom God had ordered the whole host of Heaven to worship. The Archangel Michael complied without delay, but Samael said: "I will not worship any lesser being! When Adam was made, I had already been perfected. Let him rather worship me!" Samael's angels agreed, and Michael warned them: "Beware, lest God be angry!" Samael replied: "If He show anger, I will set a throne above the stars and proclaim myself the Highest." Then Michael flung Samael out of Heaven and down to earth, where he nevertheless continued to scheme against God's will.

b. Others say that when all the angels had obediently fallen at Adam's feet, Samael addressed God: "Lord of the Universe, You created us from the splendour of Your Glory. Shall we then adore a being formed from dust?" God replied: "Yet this creature, though formed from dust, surpasses you in wisdom and understanding." Samael challenged Him: "Test us!" God said: "I have created beasts, birds and creeping things. Go down, and set them all in line; and if you can name them as I would have them named, Adam shall reverence your wisdom. But if you fail, and he succeeds, you must reverence his."

In Eden, Adam did obeisance to Samael, whom he mistook for God. God, however, pulled him upright and asked Samael: "Will you be the first to name these beasts, or will Adam?" He answered: "I will, being both elder and wiser." God thereupon set oxen before him, inquiring: "How are these named?" When Samael stood silent, God removed the oxen. He fetched a camel, and afterwards an ass, but Samael could not name either.

God then planted understanding in Adam's heart, and spoke in such a manner that the first letter of each question pointed to the beast's name. Thus He took oxen, saying: "Open your lips, Adam, and tell me their name!" Adam answered: "Oxen." God next showed him a camel, saying: "Come, tell me the name of this!" Adam answered: "Camel." Lastly God showed him an ass: "And can you name this also?" Adam answered: "It is an ass."

When Samael saw that God had enlightened Adam, he yelled indignantly. "Do you yell?" God asked. "How should I not," replied Samael, "when You have created me from Your Glory, and afterwards bestow understanding on a creature formed from dust?"

God said: "O evil Samael, are you astonished at Adam's wisdom? Yet he will now foresee the birth of his descendants, and give every one his own name, until the Last Days!" With that, He hurled Samael and his attendant angels from Heaven. Samael clutched at Michael's wings, and would have dragged him down too, had God not intervened.

c. Some allege that Satan was not Samael, but the oxlike Prince of Darkness who had opposed God's creative will even before He commanded "Let there be light!" When God said: "Away! I will create My world in light!," the Prince asked: "Why not from darkness?" God replied: "Beware, lest I subdue you with a shout!" The Prince, loth to acknowledge himself God's inferior, feigned deafness. Whereupon God's shout subdued him, as He had threatened. Samael and his angels were banished to a dark dungeon, where they still languish, their faces haggard, their lips sealed, and are now known as the Watchers. In the Last Days, the Prince of Darkness will declare himself God's equal, and claim to have taken part in Creation, boasting: "Though God made Heaven and Light, I made Darkness and the Pit!" His angels will support him; but the fires of Hell shall quench their arrogance.

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1. "Samael," though said to mean "Venom of God," is more likely a cacophemism for "Shemal", a Syrian deity. In Hebrew myth, Samael occupies an ambiguous position, being at once "chief of all Satans" and "the greatest prince in Heaven" who rules angels and planetary powers. The title "Satan" ("enemy") identified him both with Helel, "Lucifer, son of Dawn", another fallen angel; and with the Serpent in the Garden of Eden who plotted Adam's downfall. Some Jews also hold that he had planned to create another world, which identifies him with the Gnostic "Cosmocrator" or "Demiurge." The Orphic Greek Cosmocrator Ophion, or Ophioneus, was also a serpent.

2. Adam's naming of the beasts is a tale derived perhaps from a myth of how the alphabet was invented: the first and third Hebrew letters being *aleph* and *gimmel*, namely "ox" and "camel."

3. That darkness (*hoshekh*) had existed long before Creation not as a mere absence of light, but as a positive entity, was believed by all Middle Eastern and Mediterranean peoples. The Greeks spoke of their "Mother Night"; the Hebrews of their "Prince of Darkness", relating him to Tohu, and placing him in the North. The shout with which God overcame this Prince recalls Pan's when, according to Apollodorus, he subdued Typhon: a monster whose wings darkened the sun, and who also lived in the north, on Mount Saphon.

4. "Watchers" (*egrègorikoi* in Greek), the name given to Satan's angels in the *Second Book of Enoch*, seems to be a rendering of two Aramaic words: *irim*, applied to angels in *Daniel* iv. 10 and 20; and *qaddishin*, "holy ones." A nearer translation would be "guardian angels," which agrees with their functions and with the meaning of their names. According to *Midrash Tehillim* on *Psalm* i., *ir* refers to the deity *Eloah*.

The Births of Cain and Abel

SOME SAY that Samael disguised himself as the Serpent and, after vengefully persuading man to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, fathered Cain upon Eve; thus defiling all the offspring of her subsequent union with Adam. Only when the Children of Israel stood beneath Mount Sinai and received the Law at Moses's hands was this curse finally lifted. It still taints the other nations.

b. According to some accounts, Samael never lay with Eve before Adam had done so. God at first intended Samael to rule the world, but the sight of Adam and Eve coupling, naked and unashamed, made him jealous. He swore: "I will destroy Adam, marry Eve, and truly rule." Having waited until Adam had lain with Eve and fallen asleep, he took Adam's place. Eve yielded to him, and conceived Cain.

Soon, however, she repented of her faithlessness and cried tearfully: "Alas, Adam, I have sinned! Banish me from the light of your life. I will go westward, there to await death." Three months later, having reached the Ocean, Eve gathered branches and built a hut. When the pangs of labour overcame her, she prayed God for deliverance, but fruitlessly, and could only beg the Sun and Moon to tell Adam of her plight on their next eastward circuit. This they did. Adam hastened to Eve's side and, finding her still in labour, joined his prayers with hers. God sent down twelve angels and two Virtues, led by Michael, who stood at Eve's right hand, stroking her face and breast, until she gave birth.

c. Since the infant Cain's face shone angelically, Eve knew that Adam had not been his father and, in her innocence, exclaimed: "I have *gotten* a man-child from Yahweh!"

d. Others account for Cain's name by saying that he stood up as soon as born, ran off and brought back a wheat straw, which he gave to Eve; who thereupon called him Cain, which means "stalk."

e. Afterwards Eve bore a second son, whom she named Abel, which means "breath" or, some say, "vanity" or "sorrow," foreseeing his early doom. This knowledge came to her in a dream: she saw Cain drinking Abel's blood and refusing his mournful plea to be left a few drops. When Eve told Adam her dream, he said: "We must part our sons." Cain therefore grew up

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as a husbandman, and Abel as a shepherd; each living in his own hut.

f. Some, however, believe that Cain was Abel's twin, begotten on Eve by Adam; their conception being one of the miraculous happenings which occurred on the Sixth Day. In the first hour, God collected Adam's dust; in the second, Adam became an inert clod; in the third, his limbs were stretched out; in the fourth, God breathed a spirit into him; in the fifth, he stood upon his feet; in the sixth, he named the beasts; in the seventh, God gave him Eve; in the eighth, "two went to bed, and four came out"—since both Cain and Abel were twins, immediately conceived; in the ninth, Adam was forbidden to eat fruit from the Tree of Knowledge; in the tenth, he sinned; in the eleventh, he was punished; and in the twelfth, cast out of Eden.

g. Others again hold that the first act of love between Adam and Eve produced at least four children: Cain with his twin sister, Abel with his; or even with two twin sisters.

*

1. An alleged desire of divine serpents to impregnate mortal women appears in many mythologies. Sacred serpents kept in Egyptian temples acted as the god's procreative agents. The second *Tanis Papyrus* contains a list of sacred titles given to such beneficent serpents housed in the larger temples. Among the Greeks, too, barren women would lie all night on the floor of Asclepius's temple, hoping that the god would appear in serpent shape and impregnate them during sleep. At the Phrygian Mysteries of Sabazius, women ritually married the god by letting live snakes, or golden replicas, slide between their breasts down to the thighs.

2. Such rites may have originated in an identification of snakes, emerging from holes underground, with the spirits of dead heroes. These were frequently portrayed as snakes, or half-snakes—among them Cecrops, Erichthonius, and Cadmus—and given divine honours, as happened to Asclepius and Sabazius. Alexander the Great believed that he had been fathered on Olympia by Zeus Ammon wearing serpent disguise; and his was not an isolated case. Barren women would also bathe in rivers, hoping for impregnation by the serpentine river-god. Trojan brides bathed in the Scamander, crying: "Scamander, take my maidenhead!" The Babylonian Ea, as god of the Euphrates, was shown in serpent shape, or riding a serpent.

3. Menstruation is ambivalently regarded by most primitive people as both holy and impure: holy, because marking a girl's readiness for motherhood; impure, because men must avoid contact with menstruous women. Some tribes believe that menstruation results from a snake bite; though snake venom is a coagulant. The myth of Eve's defilement by the Serpent was first told, perhaps, to explain the origin of menstruation: as caused by the lecherous Serpent whose bite made her nubile. According to one Talmudic passage, menstrual pains are among the curses that God laid on Eve.

4. The *Fourth Book of Maccabees* contains evidence for a popular belief that snakes desire intercourse with women. A mother of seven sons tells them proudly that, until marriage, she was a modest virgin whom Satan could not defile in desert or field, nor the smooth-tongued Serpent rob of her maidenhead. This belief continued to be held so strongly that a discussion is recorded in the Talmud as to the best method of safeguarding a woman so threatened:

> If on seeing a snake, she is unsure whether he lusts after her or not, she should remove her garments and throw them before him. If he coils into them, then he lusts after her; otherwise, not. And if he does so lust after her, she should have congress with her husband in the snake's presence. But, since others hold that the sight may merely increase his desire, she should rather, perhaps, take some nail parings and hair trimmings to throw at him, with the words: "I am impure!" If a snake has already penetrated her, she should sit on two barrels, her thighs parted. Then let fat meat be thrown on burning coals, and a basket of cress moistened with sweet-smelling wine be set beside the meat; and let a pair of tongs be held in readiness. When the snake smells the good food he will leave her; whereupon he must be seized and burned in the fire, lest he return.

This recalls the Serpent Samael who, grown jealous from watching Adam and Eve couple, seduced her.

5. Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the false Cosmocrator (a planetary power of the Fourth Day—like Nabu in Babylonia, and Thoth in Egypt) because he had been appointed Archangel of that day. Among the Greeks, Hermes ("Mercury") held the same planetary power and had, with Pan's help, rescued Zeus from the rebel Typhon in the deadly struggle on Mount Saphon.

6. According to *Genesis* iv. 1, Eve called her first son Cain (*qayin*) because, as she said: "I have gotten (*qaniti*) a man from Yahweh." A later account derives his name from *qaneh*, a reed or stalk. As for Abel's name, the word *hebel* was well known to mean "breath."

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"nothingness," "fleetingness" in reference to human life (*Psalm* cxliv. 4; *Job* vii. 16). However, in the Septuagint translation, "Abel" was written *hebhel* which, translated into Hebrew, becomes *abhel* or *ebhel*: "mourning" or "sorrow."

7. The twin sisters have been invented in answer to the question: "Where did Cain and Abel find wives?"

8. Samael's fathering of Cain is intended to explain the origin of evil. In the early generations the evil Cainites and the pious Sethites formed separate branches of the human family. When however the daughters of Cain succeeded in seducing the sons of Seth both good and evil became parts of men's heritage. The two strains were considered to be continuously fighting for supremacy in every human heart: only knowledge of and obedience to the Law could keep Cain's blood in check.

The Act of Love

CAST OUT of Eden, Adam and Eve rested on a riverbank and, though glad to have escaped immediate death, brooded on their loss of immortality, wondering how they might still assure the continuance of mankind. Samael, aware of Adam's preoccupation with this problem, planned to take further revenge. He and ten of his angels escaped from their underground dungeon and, assuming the shape of incomparably beautiful women, came to the riverbank. There they greeted Adam and Eve, and Adam cried incredulously: "Has the earth truly bred such matchless creatures as these?" Then he asked: "Friends, how do you multiply?" Samael answered in a woman's seductive voice: "Men lie beside us in love. Our bellies swell, we bear infants, they mature and do as we have done. If you disbelieve me, I will prove it!"

At this, other fallen angels in disguise swam up from the riverbed. Samael said: "These are our husbands and children; and since you wish to know how infants are engendered, let us show you." Whereupon the women lay down in their nakedness, each with her supposed husband, and all did ugly things before Adam's eyes. Afterwards Samael said: "Do thus with Eve, for only so can you multiply your race."

The fire of sin began to burn in Adam's veins, yet he refrained from performing an act of shame publicly in daylight, and implored God's guidance. God then sent an angel, who married Adam to Eve, commanding them to pray forty days and forty nights before coupling as husband and wife.

b. Some say that Adam and Eve were the first living creatures to perform the act of love.

1. The Essene character of this myth is unmistakable: marital embraces being here called "ugly things"; and marital desire, "the fire of sin." Nevertheless, certain Free Essenes, recognising the physical and mental dangers of cloistered celibacy—such as sexual dreams and homosexual temptation—compromised by permitting marriages in which the act of love was performed in obedience to God's command "Increase and multiply!" but without sensual pleasure.

2. A Hittite myth, *Appu from Shudul*, also contains the notion that sexual practice is not an inborn human instinct, but must be taught.

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Walter Laqueur

Remembering Stalin

GREAT MEN, taken up in any way—surely we know this at least since Carlyle—are profitable company: we can hardly contemplate them without gaining something. Yet how to define greatness?

"Of course, history alone can show how important this or that public man has been." It was Stalin who said this. But history, we are told, usually passes final judgments only after people cease to care; meanwhile each generation does its revaluing according to its political lights. To forecast how "this or that public man" is likely to fare in the judgment of coming generations amounts to predicting the course of politics of the next century. Communists will hardly ever agree with non-communists about the role of Stalin; even among the former, differences of opinion will persist as to whether the late "father of the people" did more harm than good, or whether in that so-called last analysis he was "a progressive force" after all. Such fluctuations in the posthumous fortunes of historical figures can persist for a long time. Up till the middle 'thirties Russian historians took a dim view of the activities of Ivan IV ("the Terrible") who, they said, had been in a state close to mental illness. In the heyday of Stalinism (for obvious reasons) there was a wholesale reappraisal and Ivan became one of the great heroes of Russian history—cruel by necessity, yet wise in his decisions. After Stalin's death, the Tsar was at once downgraded, cautiously at first, but recently in a more sweeping way. Ivan IV has been dead for close on four hundred years; Jenghiz Khan has not been with us for even longer, and yet, as we recently learned to our surprise, Marxists cannot agree as to his place in history (some, in Mongolia and Peking, think he played a progressive role; those in Moscow disagree emphatically).

Such shifts and reversals in historical appraisal are bound to be far more abrupt in a dictatorship, but of course they do happen elsewhere: the historiography of the French Revolution and of Napoleon is an obvious example. Is it not extremely likely that rival historians of the future will champion Stalin against Trotsky, and *vice versa*, re-enacting the whole drama, in the same way that Aulard saw Danton as the hero of the revolution, while Mathiez held it to be Robespierre? The Michelet school already seems to be behind us: those who (as Pieter Geyl argues) described the terror but did not allow the radiant beauty of their dreams to be darkened by what they had so keenly observed. Patriotism and "loyalty to the revolution" the decisive criteria then; the "strengthening of Soviet power" became the chief test in a later age. Since Stalin did not reintroduce private ownership of the means of production, he could scarcely escape remaining progressive whatever he did. Had fifty million people perished in the process instead of five or ten, would "quantity" then have become a new quality? The dialectic doesn't tell us.

YET THERE ARE GOOD REASONS for thinking that Stalin will fare worse than the heroes of the French revolution. "Public men," to use his own phrase, are, after all, appraised in the context of their times. Some of Ivan's actions were deplorable, but then his age was not exactly a model of enlightenment. Stalin, on the other hand, will be judged as a twentieth-century ruler, not as a sixteenth-century despot—and against this background historians cannot fail

JOSEPH VISSARIONOVICH STALIN *died in Moscow on 5 March, 1953, and was buried in the Kremlin. (He has since been re-buried.)*

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to note the relapse into barbarity. It is surprising (and somewhat illogical) that some historians who believe that the golden progressive age is ahead of us should have any doubts about this, for a more civilised time is likely to judge Stalinism even more harshly than our own.

Nero, Tsar, Stalin

NERO, *too, was a product of his epoch. Yet after he perished his statues were smashed. and his name was scraped off everything. The vengeance of history is more terrible than the vengeance of the most powerful General Secretary. I venture to think that this is consoling.*

LEON TROTSKY, *"Stalin" (1939)*

28 February 1917

"I WAS AROUSED *by strange noises... I got up and saw two soldiers, their bayonets hooked into the canvas of Repin's portrait of Nicholas II, rhythmically tugging it down from both sides. A minute later, over the chairman's seat in the White Hall of the Duma there was an empty frame, which for many months continued to yawn in this revolutionary hall.... A number of soldiers were standing on the upper levels of the chamber, at the height of my gallery. Leaning on their rifles they watched what their comrades were doing, and quietly made their own comments. I went over to them and listened eagerly.... Twenty-four hours before, these rank-and-file soldiers had been the dumb slaves of the despot who was now thrown down, and at this moment the outcome of the revolution depended on them. What had taken place in their heads during those twenty-four hours? What would they say to the shameful treatment of the portrait of the "adored monarch" of yesterday? It evidently made no strong impression: there was neither surprise, nor any sign of intense intellectual activity, nor a shadow of that enthusiasm from which even I myself was ready to catch fire. They were making remarks in a tranquil and matter-of-fact way.*

The break had been accomplished with a sort of fabulous ease. No better sign was needed of the definitive rottenness of Tsarism and its irremediable ruin."

N. N. SUKHANOV,
The Russian Revolution (1917)
(tr. Joel Carmichael, 1955, O.U.P.)

IN *five years it may be as dangerous to praise Stalin as it was to attack him two years ago. But I should not regard this as an advance. Nothing is gained by teaching the parrot a new word.*

GEORGE ORWELL *(September 1946)*

Especially to Communist historians of the future, Stalin will be a major embarrassment. They may even do him some injustice, for the comparatively sane beginnings of a public figure in history are usually overshadowed by later wilder, more dramatic events. Who but a few readers of Suetonius remember that Caligula was universally welcomed as a moderate leader when he came to power and promised to restore the rule of law suspended under Tiberius? And who recalls that Napoleon was first hailed as the leader most likely to restore peace to France?

If history rarely passes unanimous judgments, still each generation of historians feels obliged to take a stand. Both Burke and Paine have survived as major commentators on the French revolution despite their passionate engagement. I wonder whether to-day's relativist and wait-and-see historians will fare as well. I read the other day that Mr. E. H. Carr has said that "to us Hitler, at the moment, seems a bad man, but will they think Hitler a bad man in a hundred years' time or will they think the German society of the 'thirties bad?..." Most of us think that Hitler *was* "a bad man" and that German society was in something less than good shape. It is quite likely that a hundred years from now some misguided people will put *all* the blame on German society; according to some evidence, this may even happen much earlier. Yet what concern is this of ours? Has the effort to anticipate the judgment of posterity ever really produced great works of historiography? Politically the suspension of moral standards is disastrous. It should be fairly obvious by now that the believers in "historical necessity" bear at least some responsibility for the rise of Hitler and Stalin; a great many more people would have resisted the dictatorship had it not been said to be irresistible, had they not been captives of some notion of a "wave of the future" or an "historic process."

WE ARE, OF COURSE, all anti-Stalinists nowadays. The friends or relatives of many of his victims are still alive; in Russia the authorities have really only just begun to permit them to give expression to their feelings. It may take years before the anti-Stalin wave reaches its peak. Yet in a few decades the sufferings will have receded into the past and one can foresee with some certainty a revisionist school of historians who will reassess Stalin in historical perspective without emotional involvement. Who can believe that he will ever again

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be proclaimed as "one of the geniuses of world history?" Stalin dominated a greater stage and his actions had an impact on many more people than had either Cromwell or Napoleon: which makes him very important indeed. Everything done by the ruler of two hundred million people is important, however cruel, however stupid. Disastrous though the policies of the present Chinese leaders may be (unless they succeed in reducing the population of their country by some significant percentage), China is bound to remain a big and therefore an important country. It is apparently exceedingly difficult to ruin a big country, and only Hitler seems to have succeeded, but then it is too early to say whether his was a lasting success, and anyway Germany was too small to qualify as a super-power by twentieth-century standards. Any President of the United States after 1914 (even Hoover, even Eisenhower) any ruler of Russia after 1880, any leader of China since 1930, must figure prominently in future history books.

Stalin, as the hero and villain of the totalitarian age, will probably be compared not with Napoleon or Robespierre but with his most outstanding contemporary, namely Adolf Hitler. This, curiously enough, may be the best way of salvaging part of his reputation.[1] Hitler suffered from romantic delusions; he thought he could dominate the world as the leader of a people of seventy million and with a doctrine of racial exclusivity which made collaboration with other peoples impossible. This, in a way, doomed him from the very beginning. Stalin, the realist, was far more aware of the limitations of his land and the international Communist movement—his Marxian studies stood him in good stead here.

Within the framework of their own movements, Hitler was undoubtedly the more important and the more gifted leader. Without Hitler, National Socialism as we know it would not have come to power. The extreme right might have prevailed in 1933, but a Germany led by a Goering, (not to mention a Frick or Hugenberg) would have been a very different proposition. When Stalin came to power the course of the Russian revolution was already set. After 1921 there was no serious attempt at military intervention; Bolshevism would have remained in power with or without Stalin. Hitler was an excellent speaker, absolutely dominated his subordinates by force of personality, and exuded the charisma of a leader of men or, at any rate, of one "possessed." Stalin was anti-charismatic; he came to power by organisational scheming and plotting, and ruled by means of an elaborate apparatus, but only after he had liquidated the "Old Bolsheviks" almost without exception. (Apparently Hitler had only contempt for his *alte Genossen*; he was certainly not afraid of them, which may be the reason why so many of them survived.) With the exception of June 1934 there were no major purges in Nazi Germany: Goebbels, Goering, Himmler, *et al.*, remained with him to the end of the war.

YET A COMPARISON suggests that Stalin was more ideally suited for the control of a totalitarian state. His critics have made great play of his intellectual shortcomings. That he was not a great thinker needs hardly to be emphasised to-day (though the distance between him and the other Old Bolsheviks was perhaps less than some wish us to believe). In this, as in most other respects, he was mediocre. But an intellectual at the helm might not have lasted long; in difficult situations he might have wavered, for there were so many aspects to be considered, so many eventualities to be taken into account. Stalin's mind was a simple one; there were a number of basic truths which he had learned at an early age, and these were all that mattered for his purpose. Surely he understood them better than his rivals did: that only power mattered and that all the rest was idle talk—that the cadres decide everything—that heavy industry was more decisive than light industry—and so on. His very limitations were an enormous advantage: they made it easier for him to act. That he frequently took wrong decisions did not greatly matter—somebody else would be paying for them in any case.

Both Hitler and Stalin regarded themselves as indispensable; they would have found much common ground in their distrust and contempt of the people; nor was there much to choose between their views about such things as justice or truth. Hitler could afford to be cynically frank in his infrequent utterances about these subjects, whereas Stalin had to be described in official

[1] We know little about what Stalin thought of Hitler; he never publicly ridiculed him, as far as I know. Hitler thought highly of Stalin; in his *Table Talk* there are frequent references to him as one "of the most extraordinary figures in world history." . . . "Stalin too must command our unconditional respect. In his own way he is *ein genialer Kerl*" (oddly translated in the English edition as "a hell of a fellow").

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and unofficial writings as modest, sincere, truthful and deeply devoted to the masses. Hitler fancied himself to be a kind man, basically; whereas Stalin (according to the official literature) was merciless towards the enemies of the party but a paragon of humanity and solicitude in every other respect. Hitler acted and reacted quickly without much self control; Stalin was unhurried in his decisions. Stalin will be judged by rational criteria to a far greater extent than Hitler; yet what appeared to some of his contemporaries titanic achievements may appear to future historians as so much sound and fury. History is usually more willing to forgive cruelty (even senseless cruelty) than hypocrisy; surely Stalin was one of history's great hypocrites.

He shared with Hitler a great capacity for sustained work, though he was more painstaking, pedantic, plodding, and therefore better suited to direct a gigantic bureaucracy. Hitler was bored by the minute organisational work in which Stalin found obvious satisfaction. As strategists they were apparently equally gifted (which means that they understood no more about military science than possibly one or two million others). If they proved to be right on occasion against the advice of their generals, this reflects the quality of the judgments of professional soldiers. It is almost comical how easily myths are created—and believed. Stalin's best-known Western biographer describes his image as a strategist: "a prodigy of patience, tenacity and vigilance, almost omnipresent, almost omniscient," and on another occasion: "He displayed extraordinary will power, tenacity and cool headedness." One should compare this with what is now said and written on the subject in Russia by those who ought to know. Hitler's ideas of the *Blitzkrieg*, it could be argued, proved very successful in the West—but disastrous in Russia. Stalin, in his military decisions as in his foreign policy, for many years mainly reacted to outside challenges; domestic affairs had for him absolute priority during the 'thirties. Once he had decided to "build socialism in one country" he was more or less on his own: nothing that Marx, and very little that Lenin, had written was of much help in the transformation of Soviet society. Hitler's position was much easier; he never envisaged radical social change; economics and domestic affairs were of little interest to him; his party never had a clear social and economic programme. Yet is it really correct to say that German economy "stagnated" under Hitler? In fact it made considerable progress (in comparison with the low of 1932/3), even if the rate of growth was much smaller than that in the Soviet Union; it was bound to be smaller in a country that was already fully industrialised. Once the worst of the world crisis was over the German economy would have improved anyway—but so would the Soviet economy after 1929 under any sensible leadership. Much of the German industrial production was geared to armament (though less than is commonly assumed). It is one of the major riddles of the Third Reich that Hitler did not prepare more efficiently for his great war. Some historians now say that he did not "'really" want a war; I tend to believe that his ignorance on all things economic was a decisive factor.

STALIN'S REAL and lasting merit (or so it is often said) was the industrialisation of Russia. He realised that it was a race against time, that Russia would again be overwhelmed as it had been so often in its past, unless it emerged as a strong industrial power within a decade or so. And so it did—there was "the tremendous advance in heavy industry in the 'thirties"; the Red Army was "strong and fully prepared" when the great test came in 1941; the Nazi menace was defeated; Russia became "the strongest industrial and political power in Europe"—all this owing to the man in the Kremlin who relentlessly pursued his aims, regardless of all obstacles and difficulties. This amounts, surely, to the most persuasive plea that can be made for Stalin. Yet this version has already received some bad knocks, and in the years to come not much of it is likely to survive.

The first World War, the Revolution, and the Civil War had interrupted Russia's industrialisation. By the time the ravages had healed, in the late 'twenties, the stage was set for rapid industrialisation—under any leadership. It was merely a question of the rate of growth; Five-Year-Plans were not Stalin's invention. Soviet industrial output between 1928 and 1940 might have only been doubled rather than quadrupled under a less brutal régime, but it is more than doubtful whether this would have had a fatal effect on Russia's ability to resist the German invasion. Stalin's mistakes and failures weigh heavily in the balance: the dislocation in industry and the weakening of the army caused by the purges, the widespread disaffection of the population caused by the forced collectivisation

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(which even Soviet authors are beginning to admit was "a mistake" as carried out), Stalin's refusal to believe in, and to prepare his forces for, a Nazi attack when all the world knew it would come in spring 1941. When all the mistakes are added up, not much remains of the myth of the great leader who foresaw so much. That the terrible reverses during the first part of the war were unnecessary is now maintained by all Soviet authors; Russia, after all, was neither Denmark nor Holland, and a *Blitzkrieg* could not have worked. She had been a formidable military power even under the not-so-efficient leadership of the Tsars; her armies—with the advantage of vast numbers and territory—had defeated greater military geniuses than Hitler. The question whether, at such a high price, Stalin was "necessary" for the Communists has been debated by Messrs Nove, Labedz and Seton-Watson in ENCOUNTER in some detail. Necessity has been the tyrant's plea since time immemorial. Stalin's decision to achieve a high rate of industrial growth by holding down consumption and wages and by concentrating on high investment rates and the production of goods that cannot be consumed was dictated not by economic but by political considerations. Such a policy could be pursued only by a dictatorship, and (as an economic historian has recently emphasised[2]) it provided a government with a social function and a justification for its existence:

> . . . a policy of rapid increases in the levels of consumption may, in the short run bridge the political difficulties, but in the long run is likely to create troublesome problems. Plentiful supplies for consumers' goods produce a climate of relaxation among the populace which is not congenial to dictatorships. Once the stress and strain have been reduced, the problem of political liberty is almost bound to arise. . . .

NECESSARY OR NOT, the social impact of Stalinism on the Russians was far more lasting than Hitler's on the Germans. So was its impact on Soviet intellectual life. Isaac Deutscher concludes his biography of Stalin with an impressive comparison of intellectual life in the Third Reich and in Stalinist Russia. Hitler, we learn, ruined German cultural life; Stalin on the other hand gave a tremendous impetus to Russian intellectual life by sending the whole nation to school. "Its (Germany's) medical men were turned into specialists on the racialist purity of blood and into assassins of those whose blood was deemed impure. . . ." The level of German medicine suffered from the exodus of the Jews, and several hundred German physicians committed unspeakable crimes against humanity. Yet 99% of German physicians went about their jobs as they had before and as they have since, as did Soviet physicians under Stalin, doing some good and some harm (inventing, incidentally, the sulphonamides and making a few other discoveries). Mr. Deutscher also stated that "Stalin has not, like Hitler, forbidden the new generation to read and study the classics of their own literature whose ideological outlook does not accord with his." Closer investigation shows that much of Dostoevsky, some of Tolstoy, Leskov, Pisemski and others, was either not published at all under Stalin, or in small editions for specialists; other classics were carefully edited. Hitler banned the works of Heine and other Jews; no other German classics, with the exception of Lessing's *Nathan der Weise*, were banned. Nazism, being less ideological in character, took less interest in cultural affairs; it had not time in half a dozen years to ripen into full totalitarianism. In order to survive (with some notable exceptions) it sufficed not to be anti-Nazi; in the Soviet Union a far greater measure of active participation and affirmation was needed. This is, I think, an important point that has not been given sufficient attention. The glaring exceptions in Nazi Germany were in architecture, painting, and sculpture. Here there is a curious parallelism with Stalin's Russia; for all dictators apparently have a weakness for monumental buildings, statues, and portraits. Psycho-analysis was banned in Nazi Germany (as in Russia) and it became difficult to do serious work in biology in either country.

IN COMPARING the state of literature in Nazi Germany and in Stalin's Russia one finds some striking differences. Many German writers compromised themselves by signing political manifestos and, by and large, nothing of great importance was written in the era of the Third Reich. Yet there was no pressure on German writers to describe in their poems Hitler's boyhood in Braunau, or in their novels his military exploits as an N.C.O. in World War I. Their works were mainly an ineffectual kind of escapism. With the exception of an exceedingly

[2] Alexander Gerschenkron in his book, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (1962).

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small group who had a special commission to do so, they did not deal with the history of the Nazi party in their works. In the Soviet Union the "cult of personality" was incomparably more pervasive; the Leonidzes and Pogodins, the Pavlenkos and Virtas, the Alexei Tolstois and Surkovs devoted poems, plays, and novels to the leader. Yet not only the hacks created such literature; the greatest contemporary writers made their contributions too—Leonid Leonov (*Slovo o pervom deputate*) for instance, or Konstantin Fedin (*Uncommon Summer*) or Sholokhov (*Virgin Soil Upturned*). So did many who are now in the forefront of the battle for a more liberal course in Soviet literature—Alexander Tvardovsky (in *Strana Muravia*), Margarita Aliger, Konstantin Simonov. Even the authors of children's literature made their contribution. I have been re-reading what Soviet writers wrote on the occasion of Stalin's seventieth birthday in December 1949—and it is a painful experience. It has since been argued that the "cult of the individual" was indeed very harmful but that, nevertheless, some great works were produced even in that dark period. The underlying idea is that one could delete the scenes or anecdotes where Stalin is introduced just as an entry from an encyclopædia could be omitted. This may be so in a very few cases where the Stalin episodes were quite obviously added more or less artificially to a poem or novel (perhaps after some outside prodding). Yet by and large such surgery is quite impracticable. The books and poems and plays did not merely express fulsome praise for the leader; they were permeated with the spirit of the epoch. According to one of the proverbs which Chairman Khrushchev likes to quote, a little gall suffices to spoil a barrel of honey.... The situation in other fields—whether we take the cinema in the early 'fifties or philosophy or political economy—was not very different. The intellectual impact of Stalinism was no less lasting than its social results; the Soviet Union will have to bear the consequences for a long time to come.

IF HITLER WAS EVIL, the element of calculated cruelty was much smaller in Stalin. To equate the Nazi extermination camps and Stalin's labour camps, as one writer did some time ago in these pages,[3] betrays, it seems to me, a lack of knowledge, or imagination, or both. Stalin was evil "from necessity" (the ideological argument ran.); he used terrible means to reach a humanist ideal; he killed in the name of liberty and for a better future. All this may not have made a noticeable difference to his victims, but it did in fact put certain limitations in his way—limitations which Hitler, for obvious reasons, never faced. It is debatable whether, and to what degree, Stalin still believed in the future ideal society towards the close of his life; or whether, as far as he was concerned, the means had become the ends themselves. (I have heard it said in Russia that "only the methods were deficient but the basic idea was—and is—good. ..." Others have insisted that "the way Stalin set about introducing Communism was bad, but the basic idea wasn't much good either....") It certainly appears now to have been naïve, and naïveté in politics (as Stalin observed in one of his articles in 1917) "borders on the criminal." There is one important mitigating circumstance: Hitler's tyranny was entirely of his own making; Stalin's dictatorship was very much in line with his own character and style, yet the ground was largely prepared by historical circumstances: Tsarist *samoderzhavie* and the kind of régime established by Lenin in 1917 with its built-in tendency towards autocracy. The following year Rosa Luxemburg predicted accurately how it would all end—and at that time there was no Stalin in sight.

SEVENTEEN THOUSAND HISTORIANS in the Soviet Union (according to the figures of October 1961)—and add to that a handful outside Russia—face then a touching dilemma: how to explain the phenomenon of Stalinism in terms of Marxian historical materialism? Engels wrote that whether in a particular country at any particular time a particular individual emerged was "pure accident," but if that man were removed the demand for a substitute would immediately arise and the substitute would be found *tout bien que mal*. Plekhanov, the "father of Russian Marxism" who wrote the classic work about the role of the individual in history, was even more emphatic:

> It has long been observed that the great talents appear everywhere, whenever the social conditions favourable to their development exist. This means that every man of talent who becomes a social force is the product of social relations. ... A great man is great not because his personal qualities give individual features to great historical events, but because he possesses qualities

[3] "Auschwitz," ENCOUNTER, April 1960.

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> which make him most capable of serving the great social needs of the time. . . .

What social and political conditions existed in Russia in the 'twenties that favoured the appearance of Stalin and Stalinism? What social relations produced Stalin—and what qualities did he possess that made him "most capable of serving the great social needs of the time?" These are admittedly difficult, not to say awkward, questions, and it is not surprising that we have not yet had a Marxist explanation from Russia. Since it is rather unlikely that Soviet historians will find Marxism completely satisfactory on the role of the hero in history, they will inevitably have to play down the role of Stalin. Perhaps he was not so important after all? In the most recent Russian historical works Stalin is not mentioned (or quoted) at all, even where for obvious reasons he should figure quite prominently. Instead, such circumlocutions as the "leadership of the party" (*Rukovodstvo* KPSS) are used; this is somewhat threadbare for it is not exactly a secret that one man constituted the leadership of the party for many years. Such sleight of hand will not serve very well on the stage of history. The Russians, with very few exceptions, suffered a great deal under Stalin. One can, perhaps, make Trotsky an "unperson" but not Stalin; it would be inhuman and, incidentally, ineffective to belittle Stalinism. Since the Russians are very human and desperately eager to "rehabilitate" their past, the present leadership has been steering a middle course: from the release of the Kremlin doctors in April 1953 to the publication of *Ivan Denisovich* in November 1962.

BROADLY SPEAKING, four periods can be discerned in the process of de-Stalinisation. The first began almost immediately after the death of the dictator in March, 1953; the purges were discontinued, the leadership re-organised, some secret police chiefs were removed. In this period Ilya Ehrenburg wrote his novel *The Thaw*. There was as yet no open criticism of Stalin, but his name was mentioned less often in public speeches, the press, on the radio and in scholarly publications. Some of the Old Bolsheviks were now rehabilitated, albeit posthumously. Publicity was given to these rehabilitations only after the famous Twentieth Party Congress in February, 1956, which constitutes the beginning of the second phase of de-Stalinisation. This congress proclaimed the consolidation of "socialist legality" and the return to "Leninist norms of inner-party democracy." The official party history (the famous *Short Course*) was criticised for the first time. The highlight of this congress, Khrushchev's famous speech on February 25th (the text of which became known several weeks later) was a most effective debunking of Stalin all along the line. Yet it was a *secret* speech and has not been made public in the Soviet bloc to this very day. The Soviet leaders preferred to move with great caution. ("We had to tell the people the truth," Khrushchev said later). Word got round, nevertheless, and the second wave of de-Stalinisation reached its peak in the summer of 1956 with a great debate among the Communist Parties. The moment it appeared that the reaction might get out of hand, instructions were given to apply the brakes —as the Central Committee's resolution of June 30, 1956 (on the "cult of personality") and *Pravda* editorials (to the effect that Stalin's terrorism was necessary) bear witness. In these circumstances there was strictly limited scope for an intellectual ferment that found expression in a number of anthologies, novels, and poems. Even the most famous novel of the period, Vladimir Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone* was not really directed against Stalin and Stalinism but merely against certain negative features in the society and a certain type of leader (*"Drozdov"*). Yet once the immovable controls had been removed, the borderline between what was permissible and what was taboo was no longer quite clear. A kind of no-man's land came into being and some courageous men dared occasional forays—and beat their retreat when they sensed that the cross-fire was too dangerous. The old leadership (the Molotovs and the Kaganovichs) warned against sweeping de-Stalinisation; they were willing at most to criticise specific aspects of the Stalin epoch, but they refused to damn Stalin himself—both because they did not believe in the new-fangled methods of leadership and because they had been so deeply involved personally. Once de-Stalinisation really got under way, where would it all end? Would it not cause (as did "de-Nazification") an unending chain of mutual recriminations and purges? Khrushchev, and Mikoyan too, had been members of the Politburo under Stalin, yet they intended to carry de-Stalinisation further than the diehards; for them, and for the younger generation, of leaders, this was a necessity in order to win the freedom essential for carrying out a policy that differed

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in some essential respects from Stalinism. Such revisions could only be made once they had dissociated themselves clearly from the legacy of the past.

After the diehards had been excluded from the party leadership, the stage was set for yet another step forward, which came at the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU in October, 1961. This time there were public speeches about the horrors of the Stalin era, ranging from a somewhat perfunctory statement by Mikhail Suslov to the touching spiritualist account of Madame Lazurkina about Lenin's visitations and what he had told her about Stalin. This congress, like the one five years earlier, provoked heated discussions in the Communist camp. Again it appeared at one stage that the reaction would be too violent. Again, as in summer 1956, the limits of "the thaw" had to be stressed. Yet in contrast to 1956, fresh impetus was given to the anti-Stalin campaign by the publication of a number of literary works such as Evtushenko's *Stalin's Heirs* in October, 1962, and the first books in a new genre hitherto only known in the West—the labour camp literature. This brings us to the fourth stage—or has de-Stalinisation now become a continuing and paramount part of the revolution from above?

IT IS TOO SOON to say. We are more certain about the limits of this movement for the time being. Everything Stalin did after 1935 can (in fact *must*) now be criticised in Russia; it is freely admitted that he committed "political mistakes" in 1917 and 1923/4, that collectivisation was unduly "harsh." Yet he is almost exclusively denounced only for what he did to his own supporters, the men and women who were willing to follow him almost blindly. He has not been taken to task for what he did to the opposition in the party (let alone to those outside it). Evidently Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, as well as Bukharin and Tomski, still remain political adversaries of the CPSU of 1963. True, they were no longer "criminals," "enemies of the people," "German or Japanese spies," admissions that were made rather grudgingly, and so far implicitly. It seems fairly likely that within a few years the right-wing deviationists will be partly rehabilitated (rumours to that effect seem to have been premature). If they committed political mistakes, didn't Stalin? The left-wing opposition of the 'twenties presents greater difficulties to Khrushchevian historiography, and no solution seems to be in sight. Yet all these are tactical problems, so to speak; the basic issues have not yet been faced.

According to the currently valid version, Stalinism was *not* inherent in Leninism, was *not* its natural and logical successor, but merely an aberration, a form of degeneration. The structure of Soviet society remained sound, economic reconstruction continued, and foreign policy was "progressive," even during the darkest years. Some have compared—wrongly I believe—Stalin to Napoleon spreading the achievements of the French revolution. (It is an ungainly comparison anyway. Do Soviet historians regard Napoleon's invasion of Russia as a progressive event? Didn't Napoleon's aggression produce an anti-liberal, chauvinist reaction all over Europe? Didn't Stalin do serious, perhaps lasting, harm to the Communist cause?) Real problems are not so easily solved. Those who maintain that "it can't happen again" are apparently willing to rely on the subjective factor of human goodwill (surely a very un-Marxist view) unless one insists that Russia has already made the jump "from necessity to freedom" and that the laws of historical materialism have therefore ceased to function. It would be most in line with Marxism if they argued that Stalin was a regrettable necessity but that the phenomenon cannot possibly recur since Soviet society has now reached a "higher stage" of social development and that therefore there is no longer a conceivable "objective need" for a Stalin. It is doubtful, though, whether such an answer will satisfy even the determinists. A high degree of economic development is not a guarantee against tyranny, and dictators often have an unfortunate tendency to appear without reference to "objective need."

The general trend in Russia, as far as the internal party and government is concerned, is now "back to the 1920s." Admittedly, the 'twenties are greatly preferable to the 'thirties and 'forties; yet this was the decade that proved so conducive to the growth of Stalinism. If Stalinism was some form of aberration on the part of the ruler, was it not made possible by a parallel process among his subjects?

Ludwig Quidde, in his study on Caligula, notes that specific Caesarean madness is "the product of conditions which develop from the moral degeneracy of monarchic peoples, or, at any rate, their upper classes." Omit "monarchic," and is this not a fairly accurate description of modern forms of dictatorship? Has Soviet society basic-

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ally changed? Have new checks and balances come into being to bar the way of a new dictator? Despite notable changes in the Soviet Union during the last decade, the answer is still negative. Political power is still in the hands of a very few people; the rest have no way of influencing political decisions. Robert Rozhdestvenski says in a recent poem:

We say no longer
That somebody thinks for us
Because we know now how this ends....

Independent thought may at some future date produce independent action; for the time being the independent thinker has to trust the good intentions of his rulers. The most that can be said is that, as in the 'twenties, various developments are possible—both towards the perpetration of tyranny and towards a greater measure of liberty and even democracy.

Relative optimists (I am among them) may add that with the Stalinist experience behind us all, historical prospects could only be for the better. Some optimism is based on the agreeable assumption, hitherto unproven—that a totalitarian state may in time "wither away" or may in time somehow normalise itself. Maybe. But it has not happened yet. (Is Kemalist Turkey really a suitable parallel?) Something approaching a public opinion may again develop in Russia in the course of years. An opposition outside the state party is extremely unlikely, but factions inside the party may gradually emerge and be recognised as a normal development, not as a deviation. Instead of a multi-party, there would at least be a multi-faction system. If there is polycentrism within the Communist camp, why shouldn't there be a similar development within the parties? But this, too, could happen only on the basis of mutual tolerance which at present is certainly not the norm.

These are the political problems of the Soviet Union of the 'sixties and, with luck, of the 'seventies and 'eighties. Whatever their outcome, they are hardly likely to influence our appraisal of Stalin very much.

What did Stalin accomplish? Above all, a rate of growth somewhere between 12–14% during the 'thirties. In terms of economic efficiency Stalin was a success—he did deliver the goods, or at least some of them. Against this, on the debit side, there has been untold suffering and millions of victims (during and after the collectivisation campaign, the purges, and the early stages of the war). Politically and culturally it was a monumental wasteland.

I have read some verses (mostly by Central Asian poets) which compared Stalin to a "mountain eagle"; some future historians may come to regard him as an ass in lion's skin. Does this sound preposterous to-day? Can it be that the gigantic image of the man, the legend of the all-powerful father of the peoples has loomed too large for a whole generation? I feel it is too easily forgotten how almost any image of almost any person can be fabricated in a totalitarian state. How much will remain of Stalin's iron will, his steely nerves, his tenacity, once the archives are opened and real de-mythologisation begins? There still is a widespread belief that extraordinary (if not superhuman) qualities are needed to reach the top in a dictatorship. Yet the essential qualities—the will for power, self-confidence, and single-mindedness—are not that uncommon. Historic luck seems to be much more important. Stalin was very lucky indeed.

Communism in contrast to Nazism is, I think, in the main tradition of Western civilisation, a heresy perhaps, or a utopia, but corresponding to some deep-seated traditional aspirations. Even the most inhuman Stalinist actions had to be justified by humanist arguments. Since Stalin's death, words and meanings have not yet come out of the jungle, but standards of public behaviour have certainly changed. Russia has again become conscious of its Western heritage; Russians are at great pains now to stress that, regardless of political and social differences, their country is part of the mainstream of Europe's cultural life. Is there any greater insult now than the argument that Russia has really "belonged to Asia" all along? This is an encouraging development, I think (and one should not be unduly worried by the critics of Europocentrism). Stalin will mainly be remembered as the ruler who tried to divorce his country from the Western tradition. In this he had a great, but one hopes, not a lasting success. Even God cannot change the past, but men can shape the future.

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Doris Lessing

A Woman on a Roof

IT WAS DURING the week of hot sun, that June.

Three men were at work on the roof, where the leads got so hot they had the idea of throwing water on to cool them. But the water steamed, then sizzled; and they made jokes about getting an egg from some woman in the flats under them, to poach it for their dinner. By two it was not possible to touch the guttering they were replacing, and they speculated about what workmen did in regularly hot countries. Perhaps they should borrow kitchen gloves with the egg? They were all a bit dizzy, not used to the heat; and they shed their coats and stood side by side squeezing themselves into a foot-wide patch of shade against a chimney, careful to keep their feet in the thick socks and boots out of the sun. There was a fine view across several acres of roofs. Not far off a man sat in a deckchair reading the newspapers. Then they saw her, between chimneys, about fifty yards away. She lay face down on a brown blanket. They could see the top part of her: black hair, a flushed solid back, arms spread out.

"She's stark naked," said Stanley, sounding annoyed.

Harry, the oldest, a man of about forty-five, said: "Looks like it."

Young Tom, seventeen, said nothing, but he was excited and grinning.

Stanley said: "Someone'll report her if she doesn't watch out."

"She thinks no one can see," said Tom, craning his head all ways to see more.

At this point the woman, still lying prone, brought her two hands up behind her shoulders with the ends of a scarf in them, tied it behind her back, and sat up. She wore a red scarf tied around her breasts and brief red bikini pants. This being the first day of the sun she was white, flushing red. She sat smoking, and did not look up when Stanley let out a wolf whistle. Harry said: "Small things amuse small minds," leading the way back to their part of the roof, but it was scorching. Harry said: "Wait, I'm going to rig up some shade," and disappeared down the skylight into the building. Now that he'd gone, Stanley and Tom went to the furthest point they could to peer at the woman. She had moved, and all they could see were two pink legs stretched on the blanket. They whistled and shouted but the legs did not move. Harry came back with a blanket and shouted: "Come on, then." He sounded irritated with them. They clambered back to him and he said to Stanley: "What about your missus?" Stanley was newly married, about three months. Stanley said, jeering: "What about my missus?"—preserving his independence. Tom said nothing, but his mind was full of the nearly naked woman. Harry slung the blanket, which he had borrowed from a friendly woman downstairs, from the stem of a television aerial to a row of chimney pots. This shade fell across the piece of gutter they had to replace. But the shade kept moving, they had to adjust the blanket, and not much progress was made. At last some of the heat left the roof, and they worked fast, making up for lost time. First Stanley, then Tom, made a trip to the end of the roof to see the woman. "She's on her back," Stanley said, adding a jest which

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made Tom snicker, and the older man smile tolerantly. Tom's report was that she hadn't moved, but it was a lie. He wanted to keep what he had seen to himself: he had caught her in the act of rolling down the little red pants over her hips, till they were no more than a small triangle. She was on her back, fully visible, glistening with oil.

NEXT MORNING, as soon as they came up, they went to look. She was already there, face down, arms spread out, naked except for the little red pants. She had turned brown in the night. Yesterday she was a scarlet and white woman, to-day she was a brown woman. Stanley let out a whistle. She lifted her head, startled, as if she'd been asleep, and looked straight over at them. The sun was in her eyes, she blinked and stared, then she dropped her head again. At this gesture of indifference, they all three, Stanley, Tom, and old Harry, let out whistles and yells. Harry was doing it in parody of the younger men, making fun of them, but he was also angry. They were all angry because of her utter indifference to the three men watching her.

"Bitch," said Stanley.

"She should ask us over," said Tom, snickering.

Harry recovered himself and reminded Stanley: "If she's married, her old man wouldn't like that."

"Christ," said Stanley virtuously, "if my wife lay about like that, for everyone to see, I'd soon stop her."

Harry said, smiling: "How do you know, perhaps she's sunning herself at this very moment?"

"Not a chance, not on our roof." The safety of his wife put Stanley into a good humour, and they went to work. But to-day it was hotter than yesterday; and several times one or the other suggested they should tell Matthew, the foreman, and ask to leave the roof until the heatwave was over. But they didn't. There was work to be done in the basement of the big block of flats, but up here they felt free, on a different level from ordinary humanity shut in the streets or the buildings. A lot more people came out on to the roofs that day, for an hour at midday. Some married couples sat side by side in deck chairs, the women's legs stockingless and scarlet, the men in vests with reddening shoulders.

The woman stayed on her blanket, turning herself over and over. She ignored them, no matter what they did. When Harry went off to fetch more screws, Stanley said: "Come on." Her roof belonged to a different system of roofs, separated from theirs at one point by about twenty feet. It meant a scrambling climb from one level to another, edging along parapets, clinging to chimneys, while their big boots slipped and slithered, but at last they stood on a small square projecting roof looking straight down at her, close. She sat smoking, reading a book. Tom thought she looked like a poster, or a magazine cover, with the blue sky behind her and her legs stretched out. Behind her a great crane at work on a new building in Oxford Street swung its black arm across the roofs in a great arc. Tom imagined himself at work on the crane, adjusting the arm to swing over and pick her up and swing her back across the sky to drop her near him.

They whistled. She looked up at them, cool and remote, then went on reading. Again, they were furious. Or rather, Stanley was. His sun-heated face was screwed into rage as he whistled again and again, trying to make her look up. Young Tom stopped whistling. He stood beside Stanley, excited, grinning; but he felt as if he were saying to the woman: "Don't associate me with *him*," for his grin was apologetic. Last night he had thought of the unknown woman before he slept, and she had been tender with him. This tenderness he was remembering as he shifted his feet by the jeering, whistling Stanley, and watched the indifferent, healthy brown woman a few feet off, with the gap that plunged to the street between them. Tom thought it was romantic, it was like being high on two hill-tops. But there was a shout from Harry, and they clambered back. Stanley's face was hard, really angry. The boy kept looking at him and wondered why

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he hated the woman so much, for by now he loved her.

THEY PLAYED their little games with the blanket, trying to trap shade to work under; but again it was not until nearly four that they could work seriously, and they were exhausted, all three of them. They were grumbling about the weather, by now. Stanley was in a thoroughly bad humour. When they made their routine trip to see the women before they packed up for the day, she was apparently asleep, face down, her back all naked save for the scarlet triangle on her buttocks. "I've got a good mind to report her to the police," said Stanley, and Harry said: "What's eating you? What harm's she doing?"

"I tell you, if she was my wife!"

"But she isn't, is she?" Tom knew that Harry, like himself, was uneasy at Stanley's reaction. He was normally a sharp young man, quick at his work, making a lot of jokes, good company.

"Perhaps it will be cooler to-morrow?" said Harry.

But it wasn't, it was hotter, if anything, and the weather forecast said the good weather would last. As soon as they were on the roof, Harry went over to see if the woman were there, and Tom knew it was to prevent Stanley going, to put off his bad humour. Harry had grown-up children, a boy the same age as Tom, and the youth trusted and looked up to him.

Harry came back and said: "She's not there."

"I bet her old man has put his foot down," said Stanley, and Harry and Tom caught each other's eyes and smiled behind the young married man's back.

Harry suggested they should get permission to work in the basement, and they did, that day. But before packing up Stanley said: "Let's have a breath of fresh air." Again Harry and Tom smiled at each other as they followed Stanley up to the roof, Tom in the devout conviction that he was there to protect the woman from Stanley. It was about five-thirty, and a calm, full sunlight lay over the roofs. The great crane still swung its black arm from Oxford Street to above their heads. She was not there. Then there was a flutter of white from behind a parapet, and she stood up, in a belted, white dressing-gown. She had been there all day, probably, but on a different patch of roof, to hide from them. Stanley did not whistle, he said nothing, but watched the woman bend to collect papers, books, cigarettes, then fold the blanket over her arm. Tom was thinking: If they weren't here, I'd go over and say.... What? But he knew from his nightly dreams of her that she was kind and friendly. Perhaps she would ask him down to her flat? Perhaps.... He stood watching her disappear down the skylight. As she went, Stanley let out a shrill, derisive yell; she started, and it seemed as if she nearly fell. She clutched to save herself, they could hear things falling. She looked straight at them, angry. Harry said, facetiously: "Better be careful on those slippery ladders, love." Tom knew he said it to save her from Stanley, but she could not know it. She vanished, frowning. Tom was full of a secret delight, because he knew her anger was for the others, not for him.

"Roll on some rain," said Stanley, bitter, looking at the blue evening sky.

NEXT DAY was cloudless, and they decided to finish the work in the basement. They felt excluded, shut in the grey cement basement fitting pipes, from the holiday atmosphere of London in a heat-wave. At lunchtime they came up for some air, but while the married couples, and the men in shirt-sleeves or vests, were there, she was not there, either on her usual patch of roof or where she had been yesterday. They all, even Harry, clambered about, between chimney-pots, over parapets, the hot leads stinging their fingers. There was not a sign of her. They took off their shirts and vests and exposed their chests, feeling their feet sweaty and hot. They did not mention the woman. But Tom felt alone again. Last night she had asked him into her flat: it was big and had fitted white carpets and a bed with a padded white leather head-top. She

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wore a black filmy negligée and her kindness to Tom thickened his throat as he remembered it. He felt she had betrayed him by not being there.

And again after work they climbed up, but still there was nothing to be seen of her. Stanley kept repeating that if it was as hot as this to-morrow he wasn't going to work and that's all there was to it. But they were all there next day. By ten the temperature was in the middle seventies, and it was eighty long before noon. Harry went to the foreman to say it was impossible to work on the leads in that heat; but the foreman said there was nothing else he could put them on, and they'd have to. At mid-day they stood, silent, watching the skylight on her roof open, and then she slowly emerged in her white gown, holding a bundle of blanket. She looked at them, gravely, then went to the part of the roof where she was hidden from them. Tom was pleased. He felt she was more his when the other men couldn't see her. They had taken off their shirts and vests, but now they put them back again, for they felt the sun bruising their flesh. "She must have the hide of a rhino," said Stanley, tugging at guttering and swearing. They stopped work, and sat in the shade, moving around behind chimney stacks. A woman came to water a yellow window-box just opposite them. She was middle-aged, wearing a flowered summer dress. Stanley said to her: "We need a drink more than them." She smiled and said: "Better drop down to the pub quick, it'll be closing in a minute." They exchanged pleasantries, and she left them with a smile and a wave.

"Not like Lady Godiva," said Stanley. "She can give us a bit of a chat and a smile."

"You didn't whistle at *her*," said Tom, reproving.

"Listen to him," said Stanley, "you didn't whistle then?"

But the boy felt as if he hadn't whistled, as if only Tom and Stanley had. He was making plans, when it was time to knock off work, to get left behind and somehow make his way over to the woman. The weather report said the hot spell was due to break, so he had to move quickly. But there was no chance of being left. The other two decided to knock off work at four, because they were exhausted. As they went down, Tom quickly climbed a parapet and hoisted himself higher by pulling his weight up a chimney. He caught a glimpse of her lying on her back, her knees up, eyes closed, a brown woman lolling in the sun. He slipped and clattered down, as Stanley looked for information: "She's gone down," he said. He felt as if he had protected her from Stanley, and that she must be grateful to him. He could feel the bond between the woman and himself.

NEXT DAY, they stood around on the landing below the roof, reluctant to climb up into the heat. The woman who had lent Harry the blanket came out and offered them a cup of tea. They accepted gratefully, and sat around Mrs. Pritchett's kitchen an hour or so, chatting. She was married to an airline pilot. A smart blonde, of about thirty, she had an eye for the handsome sharp-faced Stanley; and the two teased each other while Harry sat in a corner, watching, indulgent, though his expression reminded Stanley that he was married. And young Tom felt envious of Stanley's ease in badinage; felt, too, that Stanley's getting off with Mrs. Pritchett left his romance with the woman on the roof safe and intact.

"I thought they said the heatwave'd break," said Stanley, sullen, as the time approached when they really would have to climb up into the sunlight.

"You don't like it, then?" asked Mrs. Pritchett.

"All right for some," said Stanley. "Nothing to do but lie about as if it was a beach up there. Do you ever go up?"

"Went up once," said Mrs. Pritchett. "But it's a dirty place up there, and it's too hot."

"Quite right too," said Stanley.

Then they went up, leaving the cool neat little flat and the friendly Mrs. Pritchett.

As soon as they were up they saw her. The three men looked at her, resentful at her ease in this punishing sun. Then Harry said, because of the expression on Stanley's

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face: "Come on, we've got to pretend to work, at least."

They had to wrench another length of guttering that ran beside a parapet out of its bed, so that they could replace it. Stanley took it in his two hands, tugged, swore, stood up. "F... it," he said, and sat down under a chimney. He lit a cigarette. "F... them," he said, "what do they think we are, lizards? I've got blisters all over my hands." Then he jumped up and climbed over the roofs and stood with his back to them. He put his fingers either side of his mouth and let out a shrill whistle. Tom and Harry squatted, not looking at each other, watching him. They could just see the woman's head, the beginnings of her brown shoulders. Stanley whistled again. Then he began stamping with his feet, and whistled and yelled and screamed at the woman, his face getting scarlet. He seemed quite mad, as he stamped and whistled, while the woman did not move, she did not move a muscle.

"Barmy," said Tom.

"Yes," said Harry, disapproving.

Suddenly the older man came to a decision. It was, Tom knew, to save some sort of scandal or real trouble over the woman. Harry stood up and began packing tools into a length of oily cloth. "Stanley," he said, commanding. At first Stanley took no notice, but Harry said: "Stanley, we're packing it in, I'll tell Matthew."

Stanley came back, cheeks mottled, eyes glaring.

"Can't go on like this," said Harry. "It'll break in a day or so. I'm going to tell Matthew we've got sunstroke, and if he doesn't like it, it's too bad." Even Harry sounded aggrieved, Tom noted. The small, competent man, the family man with his grey hair, who was never at a loss, sounded really off balance. "Come on," he said, angry. He fitted himself into the open square in the roof, and went down, watching his feet on the ladder. Then Stanley went, with not a glance at the woman. Then Tom who, his throat beating with excitement, silently promised her in a backward glance: Wait for me, wait, I'm coming.

ON THE PAVEMENT Stanley said "I'm going home." He looked white now, so perhaps he really did have sunstroke. Harry went off to find the foreman who was at work on the plumbing of some flats down the street. Tom slipped back, not into the building they had been working on, but the building on whose roof the woman lay. He went straight up, no one stopping him. The skylight stood open, with an iron ladder leading up. He emerged on to the roof a couple of yards from her. She sat up, pushing back her black hair with both hands. The scarf across her breasts bound them tight, and brown flesh bulged around it. Her legs were brown and smooth. She stared at him in silence. The boy stood grinning, foolish, claiming the tenderness he expected from her.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"I... I came to... make your acquaintance," he stammered, grinning, pleading with her.

They looked at each other, the slight, scarlet-faced excited boy, and the serious, nearly-naked woman. Then, without a word, she lay down on her brown blanket, ignoring him.

"You like the sun, do you?" he enquired of her glistening back.

Not a word. He felt panic, thinking of how she had held him in her arms, stroked his hair, brought him where he sat, lordly, in her bed, a glass of some exhilarating liquor he had never tasted in life. He felt that if he knelt down, stroked her shoulders, her hair, she would turn and clasp him in her arms.

He said: "The sun's all right for you, isn't it?"

She raised her head, set her chin on two small fists. "Go away," she said. He did not move. "Listen," she said, in a slow reasonable voice, where anger was kept in check, though with difficulty; looking at him, her face weary with anger: "If you get a kick out of seeing women in bikinis, why don't you take a sixpenny bus ride to the Lido? You'd see dozens of them, without all this mountaineering."

She hadn't understood him. He felt her

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unfairness pale him. He stammered: "But I like you, I've been watching you and . . ."

"Thanks," she said, and dropped her face again, turned away from him.

She lay there. He stood there. She said nothing. She had simply shut him out. He stood, saying nothing at all, for some minutes. He thought: She'll have to say something if I stay. But the minutes went past, with no sign of them in her, except in the tension of her back, her thighs, her arms —the tension of waiting for him to go.

He looked up at the sky, where the sun seemed to spin in heat; and over the roofs where he and his mates had been earlier. He could see the heat quivering where they had worked. "And they expect us to work in these conditions!" he thought, filled with righteous indignation. The woman hadn't moved. A bit of hot wind blew her black hair softly, it shone, and was iridescent. He remembered how he had stroked it last night.

Resentment of her at last moved him off and away down the ladder, through the building, into the street. He got drunk then, in hatred of her.

NEXT DAY when he woke the sky was grey. He looked at the wet grey and thought, vicious: "Well, that's fixed you, hasn't it now? That's fixed you good and proper."

The three men were at work early on the cool leads, surrounded by damp drizzling roofs where no one came to sun themselves, black roofs, slimy with rain. Because it was cool now, they would finish the job that day, if they hurried.

The Card-Trick

Fifty-two cards have taken the place of life.
Fifty-two amulets of painted cardboard
have gently conspired to replace
the great primordial reality
of sufferings and pleasures of the flesh,
and this smiling new creation
goes to work peopling the stolen time
with all the dazzling primitive deceptions
of its tyrannical mythology.
Along the edges of the card-table,
life stops short. Within is another country—
all the excitement of bidding and of wishing,
the ace of spades, powerful as Don Juan Manuel,
the seven of diamonds jingling our hopes.
A lazy slowness settles on all talk,
old words go slithering down the well-known slopes
and, like the ups and downs of the game itself,
are everlastingly the same. The players
in the immediate fever of the moment
take some unlikely tricks—an accomplishment
which lends a touch of immortality
(though scarcely more than a touch)
to all their dead companions in the silence.

translated by Alastair Reid

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Roland Oliver

Exploring the History of Africa

"THE HISTORY OF AFRICA," most Westerners ask incredulously, "but is there any?" What they have in mind, of course, is that the majority of the African peoples remained illiterate until the present century. Can illiterate peoples have a history? And, if so, can that history have any significance? It is not a wholly ignorant attitude. Until a very few years ago it would have been shared even by those Westerners who were concerned with education in Africa. And certainly it would have been shared by most educated Africans. To these especially the past was a bad past, which they did not wish to remember. It had landed them in the humiliations of Western tutelage, and the only way forward was to accept that tutelage and master its secrets—in religion, in education, in economics, in politics. In history, it was the history of the West that they wanted, not the history of Africa. Any attempt to teach them the history of Africa would have been suspected as an act of patronage, an effort to keep them back, to palm them off with something second-rate.

Nowadays that attitude is changing. Young, educated Africans are still looking mainly westwards, but they are doing so in a much more critical spirit. They look west, but with a growing awareness of the east. They look west, but with a completely new sense of belonging themselves, not merely to some little tribe or region within Africa, but to the African continent as a whole. In the historical field especially, there is a growing desire to re-discover the African base underlying the superstructure of western institutions which surrounds them. And there is a new and very significant interest in the historical relationships, however tenuous, between one part of the continent and another.

The demand for African history has come, therefore, from inside Africa. And it is natural and right that the first concerted response to this demand is being made in the young Universities of West, East, and Central Africa, where there is at last beginning to emerge a body of professional scholars concerned to recover and teach the history of Africa as a single connected whole. For a moment's casual reflection will show that the first thing about African History is that much of it has been known and studied for a long time, but under other heads. African History has been with us before, but always as a part of something else.

The three thousand years of ancient Egyptian history, for example, have been studied as a part of the ancient history of the Near East, orientated northwards, and with the emphasis on what could be regarded as ancestral to the classical civilisations of the Mediterranean world. It has been the same with the North Africa of the Phœnicians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, and the Vandals. This was always treated as the Africa of Scipio and Hannibal, the granary of Rome, the breeding-ground of early Christian saints and heretics. It has been the same again with Islam and the Arabs. Though Islamic power and influence, ten centuries ago and more, encompassed the whole northern third of Africa from Senegal to Somaliland, and extended right down the East Coast to Madagascar and the Zambesi, Africa, or at any rate Africa south of its Mediterranean coastline, has been nearly ignored by western Arabists who have concentrated firmly on Europe and the Near East. And finally, the period of direct European contact with Africa from the middle of the 15th century onwards, has been no exception to the general rule. A fabulous wealth of documentary records exists in libraries and archives all over western Europe, but it has been used hitherto to describe the activities of Europeans in Africa, and the history of European empires. There has been

Dr. Oliver, who teaches at the University of London (he is head of the African Department at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies) has just returned from Accra and he writes briefly about the meeting of Africanists there in "Authors" on p. 96 of this number.

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a partitioning of African history, comparable to the political partitioning of the continent among the European powers, as a result of which the broad connecting links between east and west, north and south have been lost sight of. Historians have looked at Africa in fragments, each fragment related to an outside, non-African theme. They are only just beginning to face inwards, and to use what records there are as the starting-point of enquiries about the history of Africa itself.

THE NEW PERSPECTIVES that emerge from such a reorientation are astonishing. Take, for example, the story of ancient Egypt's expansion southwards up the Nile into Nubia and Kush, and the emergence there in Kush of an independent but strongly Egyptianised kingdom, which in the 8th century B.C. was strong enough to conquer the whole of the Nile valley and to provide Egypt itself with its 25th dynasty. These southerners were finally driven out of Egypt by the Assyrians in the 7th century B.C. But they retreated southwards with the Egyptian scholars and artists and craftsmen of sacked Thebes in their train, and consolidated a kingdom in the northern Sudan, which, with its capital first at Napata and later at Meroe, endured for a thousand years—until the 4th century A.D. Now, according to the traditional perspectives of western Egyptologists, the history of Napata and Meroe is a backwater of small interest. In their view it is ancient Egypt running steadily downhill to an inglorious and too long protracted end. But in considering the history of Africa, the roles are reversed. It is a far cry from the history of ancient Egypt to that of any part of Africa south of the Sahara, but in the thousand years of Meroitic history we have some of the clearest links between the two. And it was not only Egyptian influence that Meroe mediated southwards to negro Africa. Far above everything else in importance, she passed on the knowledge of iron-working which she herself had learned not from Egypt but direct from the Assyrians. The coming of the iron age is perhaps the most important event in the whole of African history. Much remains to be discovered about the course and the chronology of its southward spread. But the history of degenerate Meroe at least tells us where, and approximately when, it began.[1]

THE FIRST EXPEDIENT of the historian of Africa, therefore, is to re-examine all the written sources which concern any part of the continent, with his eyes focused always towards the centre rather than hovering round a section of the perimeter, with his interest directed towards the indigenous people of Africa rather than towards the outsiders who supply him with the written reports. The results of this exercise are surprising.

One quickly finds, for example, that in mediæval times the Sahara desert was much less of a barrier than it is even to-day. From the earliest centuries of the Muhammadan expansion, caravans of traders and pilgrims went to and fro, from Morocco to the Senegal, from Tripoli to the Niger, from Cairo to Lake Chad. Not only the desert itself, but the whole savannah belt to the south of it, stretching right down to the equatorial rain-forest, was therefore more or less *terra cognita* to the mediæval Arabic geographers and encyclopædists. They knew of the Negroes who dwelt there, and described the states in which they were organised. Of course, we should like to have more detail than they give us, but the outlines of mediæval West African history are clear enough. They show us a succession of loose-knit Negro empires in the Western Sudan, linked by trade with the Barbary states of North-West Africa. Internally these Sudanese empires (Ghana, Mali, Songhai, and the rest) were based essentially upon horse-power. Squadrons of cavalry ranging the open plains of the savannah belt were able to bring wide areas under subjection, to impose tribute at home and capture slaves abroad. They were able, above all, to canalise and take their toll upon the through trade in salt and hardware from the Mediterranean North, and in gold and kola-nuts from the forest fringes to the South. And finally, in the wake of the trans-Saharan trade, we see the slow but steady assimilation of the Sudanic peoples to the Muhammadan religion, and to Islamic ideas of law and politics. By the 14th century we hear of West African potentates making the pilgrimage to Mecca, and of Muslim scholars founding centres of learning at places like Gao and Timbuktu.[2]

[1] The best general account of Egypt's colonisation of Nubia and of the history of the independent kingdom of Kush is to be found in A. J. Arkell's *History of the Sudan* (Athlone Press, 1955).

[2] E. W. Bovill's *The Golden Trade of the Moors* (Oxford University Press, 1958) can be confidently recommended to the least initiated.

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So much for the interior of West Africa. For the north-eastern quarter of the continent we have, once again from Arab sources, the broad outlines of a picture of Arab settlement and conquest southwards from Egypt and westwards from the Red Sea coast, submerging the Christian kingdoms of the upper Nile valley and spreading over the eastern Sudan to Lake Chad. Eastwards, in the Horn of Africa, we see the kingdom of Ethiopia, Christianised through Alexandrian and Byzantine contacts of the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries, being slowly encircled from the 7th century onwards by a ring of Muslim city states, starting on the coasts of Eritrea and Somaliland, and penetrating up the Hawash valley towards Harar, which gradually communicated their faith to the nomad Somali and to some of the settled Galla to the east and south.[3] And lastly, for the mediæval history of the East Coast, we have the early traditions embodied in later Arabic and Swahili chronicles, and at least a sparse series of contemporary references in the works of Arab writers, which show us a string of merchant settlements leading all the way down the coast to a major outlet of gold and ivory from the interior, at Sofala near the mouth of the Zambezi. The great traveller and geographical writer, Al-Masudi of Baghdad, himself made the voyage from the Persian Gulf to Sofala about 922 A.D., and reported the existence in what is now central Mozambique and Southern Rhodesia of a Bantu kingdom, rich in cattle, which was exporting gold and ivory to the Arab seafarers of Oman, from which place it was carried as far afield as India and China. In 1331–2 Ibn Battuta of Fez made the same journey, pausing on the way at what were by this time well-established Muslim towns at Mogadishu, Mombasa, and Kilwa.

[3] For Ethiopia the short *History of Abyssinia* by A. H. M. Jones and E. Monroe, though published as long ago as 1935 and necessarily out of date, is still the best book to begin with. J. Spencer Trimingham's *Islam in Ethiopia* (O.U.P., 1952) opens a wider picture of Ethiopia's Muslim neighbours. Very important developments are taking place in our knowledge of the mediæval history of the East Coast, but there is as yet no book on the subject that can be recommended to the general reader. This is a field in which documentary and archæological evidence must be considered together, and the first serious attempt to do so will be found in a chapter by Dr. Gervase Mathew in the first volume of the three-volume *History of East Africa*, which is in course of publication (Clarendon Press, Oxford).

WITH THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY and the beginnings of the Portuguese expansion many hitherto unknown parts of Africa come within the historian's ken. We have our first glimpses of the peoples of the coastal belt of West Africa. We meet the Fantes of the Gold Coast, their chiefs already bedecked with gold insignia and wearing the much-prized *kente* cloths of brocaded silk. With one such Fante chief the Portuguese captain Diogo de Azambuja negotiated in 1482 for land on which to build the castle of Elmina. He found him, in the words of the contemporary Portuguese historian de Barros,

> a savage man, yet he was of good understanding, both by nature and by his intercourse with the crews of the trading ships, and possessed a clear judgment. As one who desired to understand what was proposed to him, he not only listened to the translation of the interpreter but watched each gesture made by Diogo de Azambuja; and whilst this continued, both he and his men were perfectly silent; no one as much as spat, so obedient and disciplined were they. At the conclusion, as though wishing to reflect upon what he had heard and to consider his answer, he fixed his eyes on the ground for a space and then replied: he received as a mark of graciousness from the King, his Lord, the desire shown both for the salvation of his soul and for the matters touching his honour; that he for his part certainly deserved it, for the good dispatch of the ships that had come thither to trade, they having been faithfully and honestly treated....
>
> On the other ships he had seen ill-dressed and ragged men only, who were content with whatever he gave them in exchange for their goods.... But with him, the captain, it was otherwise. He came with many people... and moreover with a new request—that he might establish a residence in that land....
>
> But considering the nature of so important a man as the captain, and also of the gallant people who accompanied him, he perceived that men of such quality must always require things on a lavish scale; and because the spirit of such a noble people would scarcely endure the poverty and simplicity of that savage land of Guinea, quarrels and passions might arise between them all; he asked him, therefore, to be pleased to depart, and to allow the ships to come in the future as they had in the past, so that there would always be peace and concord between them. Friends who met occasionally remained better friends than if they were neighbours, on account of the nature of the human heart....

EAST OF the Gold Coast we meet, still in the 15th century, the already ancient kingdom of Benin on the Niger Delta, where slaves could be bought cheap for re-sale to the Fantes of Elmina. Here missionary work was tried, but

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"as the king of Beny was very much under the influence of his idolatries, and sought the priests rather to make himself powerful against his neighbours with our favour than from a desire for baptism, he profited little from the ministrations of those sent thither." Round the bend of the Gulf of Guinea, on both sides of the Congo estuary, the Portuguese encountered the first big sovereignties of Bantu Africa, in the kingdom of Kongo and its satellites. Here there were some two million people owing allegiance to an absolute monarch, who, unlike the ruler of Benin, was prepared to welcome both Christian teaching and technical aid. Alfonso I, the second king known to the Portuguese, remained a devout Christian from his baptism in 1491 till his death in 1547; he learned to read and write in Portuguese, founded schools, sent Congolese to study abroad, and sought to model his kingdom on that of Portugal. Despite the progressive diversion of official Portuguese interests from the evangelisation of the Bakongo to the prosecution of the slave-trade in nearby Angola, Alfonso's successors remained at least nominal Christians throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. Small handfuls of missionaries were at work in the country for most of this period, and through their correspondence we can follow in some detail the precarious fortunes of at least one independent African state.[4]

AFTER PASSING THE CAPE just before the turn of the 16th century, the Portuguese encountered the Hottentots.

> We could never understand a word these people said, for their speech is not like that of mankind, and when they want to say anything, they make clicks with the mouth, one at the beginning, another in the middle and another at the end; so that it may be deduced from these people that the earth is not all one, nor all mankind alike.

And just beyond, in the misty hills of the Transkei, a whole series of ship-wrecked parties had their first experience of the Southern Bantu peoples: Tembu and Pondo, Xosa and Zulu. It was at the Zambezi that the Portuguese made their deepest penetration into Africa, in search of the gold which the Arabs had been exporting up the East Coast for centuries.

And they found there, in the Mozambique and Southern Rhodesia of to-day, the remains of the most considerable of all the Bantu "empires," the Shona kingdom of the Monomatapas, which is now generally assumed to have been responsible for the hundreds of stone buildings, of which the ruins at Zimbabwe are merely the largest and best-known example. By the time of the Portuguese contact the centre of this kingdom had already shifted to the north, out of the stone-building area; but its new capital was still known as Zimbabwe, and it was remembered that former capitals had been built further to the south and of stone. It is from what the Portuguese reported of the political and religious organisation of this state that we know most surely that it was not an exotic foundation, but an African kingdom infused by ideas common to vast stretches of the continent.

The Monomatapas of Southern Rhodesia, like the ancient kings of Kongo and those of Benin, and like all the states of the Sudan and the Nile valley in pre-Islamic times, were what the anthropologists used to call "divine kings." They lived a life sedulously concealed from the multitude of their subjects, cloistered in their "palaces" of reed and thatch, surrounded by a host of court officials, wives, and waiting women. Nobody, on pain of death, might see them eat or drink. They gave audience oracle-fashion concealed behind a screen. They made sacred fire, which was distributed to their chiefs and vassals as the principal symbol of authority. They sowed the first seeds and harvested the first crops, and on their physical well-being depended the health and fertility of their lands. At the onset of serious illness or incapacity they suffered ritual murder. On death their corpses were mummified and buried, in many cases with human victims to serve them in the next world. Succession was elective within the royal family, and herein lay the principal weakness of all the African kingdoms of this type, for succession disputes gave rise to splits, especially under the influence of outside pressures. Whereas the Kongo kingdom retained its unity through two hundred years of Portuguese contact, that of the Monomatapas disintegrated in less than a century to a mere rump of its former size.

[4] Two recent anthologies, *A Pageant of Ghana* by Freda Wolfson (O.U.P., 1958) and *Nigerian Perspectives* by Thomas Hodgkin (O.U.P., 1960) give an excellent impression of the kind of evidence that exists in these early European sources. There is a wealth of material of the same kind for the whole of the West Coast, for the Congo and Angola, and for the East Coast from Natal to the Zambezi. A surprising amount is even in print, though not in easily accessible editions or in well-known languages.

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In the 17th century the Monomatapas became Portuguese puppets, and their outlying provinces hived away from their allegiance. By the 18th century there was little trace of the former empire; by the 19th, none.

After the Portuguese came the Dutch. Then the French and the British. The 17th century and, still more, the 18th were the heyday of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, which was, needless to say, as important a factor in African history as it was in that of the New World. In West Africa it was this counter-attraction of the Atlantic trade that starved and finally killed the old trans-Sahara caravan routes, and the Sudanese savannah kingdoms that had controlled their southern ends. These kingdoms were now rivalled and outpaced by new states which sprang up in the forest zone between the savannah and the coast—Denkyera and Akwamu, and later Ashanti and Dahomey—built, all of them, with the aid of fire-arms imported by sea from Europe and paid for in the slave currency yielded by their wars of conquest. The records of the maritime powers of northern Europe provide the main clues to these important developments. South of the equator in the Congo and Angola, the Portuguese, with their great transatlantic dependency Brazil, remained the principal slave-trading power, though even here, at the southernmost tip of the continent, the Dutch settlement at the Cape was beginning, by the early 18th century, the long series of Kaffir wars that made up so much of the modern history of the southern Bantu.[5]

With all these documentary sources to work upon, the history of Africa, even prior to the 19th-century age of discovery, is not a complete mystery. The records are far from being fully exploited, and even the most familiar of them can still yield new evidence to the scholar who is equipped with the necessary background knowledge of Africa and its peoples.

Nevertheless, it is of course the case that even when the very last drops of evidence have been wrung from all the available documents, huge gaps in our knowledge will remain. Vast territories, especially in the centre of the continent, will remain without a single literary reference until late in the 19th century. And even in those regions where a sparse framework of documentation does exist, the literary evidence taken by itself will not be very illuminating, unless it can be supplemented from other sources. And, broadly speaking, the alternatives come down to archæology, and indigenous oral tradition.

Africa is, needless to say, no new field for the archæologist. Many world-wide reputations have already been made, and the strength of established interests is illustrated by the fact that the quadrennial meetings of the Pan-African Congress of Pre-history are attended by more than a hundred expert delegates. The overwhelming weight of this archæological effort has, however, hitherto gone into the search for man's ancestors, and into the earliest stages of human development. It is the first million years or so of African history that are most significant for the world as a whole. In world history the last two thousand years have not been Africa's most brilliant period, and the archæologists, like the historians, have left it almost alone. And yet it is the archæology of the last two thousand years, the archæology of the Iron Age, that is now becoming the top priority. It is the equivalent of the historical archæologist of the European and Middle-Eastern fields who is so rare in Africa to-day and yet so much needed.

In one aspect this problem is essentially the same as that which faces the archæologist who specialises in the Roman Empire, where there are full and continuous written records about the centre, but only scattered literary references to the state of affairs at the periphery. Here the archæologist, working from his material relics, can add more to our knowledge of Roman Britain or Roman North Africa than he can add to our knowledge of Roman Italy. In the same way, along the frontier of the Islamic third of Africa the archæologist with Middle Eastern training and interests could be, and in one or two isolated places actually is, adding immensely to our existing picture of the sparsely documented fringe of Arab influence and knowledge. For example, the archæological section of the *Institut Français d'Afrique Noire* at Dakar has in the past few years been investigating the town-sites of some of the mediæval empires of the Western Sudan, including the putative capital of ancient Ghana at Kumbi Saleh, about 200 miles north of

[5] The impact of the Atlantic trade upon the political configuration of West Africa has been well sketched by J. D. Fage in his *Introduction to the History of West Africa* (Cambridge, 1955). A similar pattern could certainly be traced in the hinterland of Angola, where the Brazil slave-trade was, at least by the early 17th century, having important political repercussions as far inland as the Katanga.

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Bamako. And again on the East Coast Dr. James Kirkman (of the National Parks of Kenya) has spent ten most valuable years excavating and reconstructing a stone-built town at Gedi, north of Mombasa, which is quite unnoticed in any of the documentary sources. Gedi shows that such settlements were not necessarily purely exotic Arab seaports, but could also be largely Africanised communities set some miles back from the coast and living perhaps on traffic with the interior as well as on plantation agriculture outside the city walls.[6]

Beyond the Islamic sphere it is seldom that the archæologist can hope to find anything as tangible or dramatic as a stone-built city. For African societies, though not always as primitive as European observers have represented them, have certainly been at their most primitive in the material things of life. Buildings have been simple and impermanent. Tools have been relatively few, and mostly made of wood or iron. There has been little china or glass, and few golden hoards. There is in fact little evidence of an archæological kind that makes a story or a study in itself—though even here there are exceptions. Rock-paintings are one exception, which have told us, for example, almost all we know about Roman penetration of the Sahara in classical times, and, at the other end of the continent, almost all we know about the relations of the Bushmen and the Bantu.

The sculpture of West Africa is another exception, showing apparently an astonishing course of continuous evolution from the stylised caricatures of the two-thousand-year-old terra cottas from Nok in Northern Nigeria, through the marvellous naturalistic portraiture in terra cotta and cast brass of Ife in Yoruba country, to the heads and plaques of Benin. These Benin bronzes were already in production at the time of the Portuguese contacts of the late 15th century and have continued, though degenerately, until the present day. Until recently all finds in Nigeria had been purely accidental. It is only in the last decade that the professional archæologist has appeared on the scene, and since then the pace of discovery has quickened so much as to suggest that soon the plastic art of West Africa as a whole may become one of the most important branches of historical enquiry.

Elsewhere in Africa archæology will probably have to deal with much less spectacular objects; but, especially for the relatively modern period, archæological methods of work will become more and more important. It will be a matter of selective excavation at small, unstratified sites, marked at most by mounds and earthworks, where the great problem will be to choose, from many thousands of possibilities, the really important sites.

It was with this problem in mind that I tried myself in Uganda the experiment of using traditional sources to help the archæologist. In the kingdom of Ankole in south-west Uganda I searched on the ground for the sites of the royal villages of successive kings, which were mentioned in the traditions. In this way I found, in 1958, a whole series of sites attributable according to the genealogy of the kings who occupied them, to various periods in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. One of these sites was attributed by tradition to two kings separated by four generations in the genealogy. In 1959 this site was excavated and the presence of two separate layers of occupation was established. The method is one that could be successfully applied in many other parts of Africa.

A similar but far more complex problem is that presented by the scores, if not hundreds, of stone ruins of Southern Rhodesia centring upon the cluster at Great Zimbabwe.

At Zimbabwe itself the classic archæological exploration was undertaken by Miss Gertrude Caton-Thompson in 1929, and there is no disposition to dispute her broad conclusions, that all the buildings are the work of Africans, that most of them were probably erected between the 9th and the 14th centuries A.D., and that they represent the political and religious centre of an African state, and not a commercial outpost of any immigrant people. Recent work by Mr. Roger Summers and others has added the subsidiary conclusion that the clusters were built up over a long period of continuous occupation, in which the best technical achievements, such as the outside girdle wall of the Elliptical Temple, come later on and probably as late as the 17th or 18th centuries.[7]

[6] An immensely readable introduction to recent archæological work on the African Iron Age is Basil Davidson's *Old Africa Rediscovered* (Gollancz, 1959).

[7] Gertrude Caton-Thompson's *The Zimbabwe Culture* (Oxford, 1931), though not in any sense a work of popularisation, is the rare example of an excavation report that can be followed with absorption by the merest layman in archæological techniques.

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Still, for all the work done at Great Zimbabwe and two or three other places of outstanding interest, at least ten times as much remains to be done, in sorting out the relationship between these larger ruins and the rest. Was Zimbabwe, in fact, an older centre of the Monomatapa's kingdom discovered by the Portuguese in the 16th century, with its capital by then built only of wood and thatch some three hundred miles away to the north? If so, can any other sites of capitals be identified and placed in chronological sequence? And what, then, of the ruins which were not capitals? Were they the headquarters of provincial governors and of tributary kings? And do they likewise fall into sequences running through the centuries?

Clearly, if such questions are to be answered at all, the archæologist will have no monopoly in the enquiry. Skilled archæological survey and highly selective excavation will be a vital part of it, but even more vital may be the part of the student of Shona traditions and social organisation. We know that several of the present Shona chiefs bear the same titles as their predecessors of the 16th century. The bones of their intervening ancestors are buried in crevices in the same rocky hills whose summits carry the remains of stone buildings. Admittedly the Shona are a group of much-conquered, often-displaced peoples, whose traditions must bear the scars of their disturbed history. Yet, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, much must still be known, which only the not ill-founded suspicion of the motives of all European enquiry has sealed up.[8]

THE VALUE of oral tradition in African history in general is a question at once of the utmost interest and difficulty. Certainly it is not a question to be ignored or dismissed out of hand. There are many people, including most of those with no centralised institutions, who have no remembered history. There are others, including many peoples situated in the middle of the continent for whom we have less than a hundred years of written records, whose traditions claim to extend backwards through as many as twenty or twenty-five generations, six or seven hundred years that is to say, from the present. And providing that no major political disaster has occurred within such a long period there need be nothing impossible in the claim.

At the same time all sorts of cautions have to be entered. In the first place, African peoples have seldom drawn any clear distinction between history and theology. Their traditions begin with the gods and continue with men, and it is not always clear where the first instalment ends and the second begins. Secondly, traditions are seldom the traditions of a whole people, but more usually of a dominant group of people in power. Therefore, even when the gods are done with, the propaganda of a ruling class has constantly to be allowed for, and may require such large deviations from the truth as the concealment of changes of dynasty, or the transference of traditions with a conquering minority from one region to another.

I once encountered an extreme example of the last phenomenon on Mount Ruwenzori. The lower slopes of this mountain are inhabited by a little-known people called the Bakonjo, who by language and physical features are clearly akin to the primitive forest tribes of the eastern Congo. Yet in 1950 a whole group of Bakonjo elders solemnly assured me that the Bakonjo came from Buganda, the populous and highly-centralised kingdom on the north-western shores of Lake Victoria. In support of their contention they pointed to the existence in their midst of a number of Ganda clan-names, and they retailed to me a series of traditions which I knew to be those of Buganda.

The explanation of this astonishing assertion proved to be traceable in Ganda traditions to a small group of outlaws, who had been involved in the assassination of an 18th-century Kabaka of Buganda, and who had fled the country in order to take up a new life among the Bakonjo and other little-known peoples in the highland valleys of the western mountains. These migrants were not conquerors but refugees. Nevertheless they came from what was by

[8] During the last few years Mr. D. P. Abraham (now a Research Fellow of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland), working from Portuguese written sources on the one hand and from Shona traditions on the other, has achieved a remarkable reconstruction of the history of the Monomatapa dynasty since the middle of the 15th century. He believes that it will now be possible to extend his traditional studies southwards into the stone-building area, for which Portuguese records are extremely thin. The full publication of Mr. Abraham's existing work will be an event in African historical studies. (His articles already published are to be found in the Native Affairs Department *Annual* of Southern Rhodesia for 1959, and in the *Journal of Africa History*, Vol. II, Part II.)

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African standards an advanced, historically-conscious community, and they settled among peoples lacking political organisation and tradition; they inter-married with these peoples, founded local branches of their Ganda clans, and passed on to their children of mixed descent the traditions of their eastern homeland. In the course of two centuries these traditions became the accepted history of the Bakonjo.

Such are some of the pitfalls of traditional history; but it is fair to add that most of them are concentrated in the early chapters, and that for well over half their courses many traditional accounts provide really valuable evidence which can stand up to most of the checks and tests that a suspicious mind can devise.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE of studies in traditional history? Probably it is immense. Hitherto most of the material which has found its way on to paper has been gathered by means of the leading question. European ethnographers and historians and African authors of the first or second literate generations have been equally responsible, and both classes have done much more good than harm. What is now needed, however, is a great volume of straight recording, careful transcription, and fine translation of history in its African forms of song and poetry, recitation and free narrative. To do this will not be nearly so easy as it sounds. It will involve preliminary language study on a scale which only the most conscientious of social scientists have hitherto attempted. It will require rigid and patient specialisation by individuals in the history of comparatively small regions.

But the rewards of such work will be great, for it will provide the historian of Africa with the indispensable basis of texts, which can be examined, re-examined, discussed, argued about and fought over through the generations still to come. Texts are what get the historian inside his subject. Here and there in Africa, notably in the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, this vital task has been seriously begun.

The pioneers in this field have been the Belgian historian, Dr. Jan Vansina, and an African priest, the Abbé Alexis Kagame. Father Kagame has been collecting for some fifteen years past, and slowly publishing in French translation, the court poetry of the kingdom of Ruanda. Much of this poetry is explicitly historical. It includes praise-songs in honour of successive kings, and esoteric compositions in verse handed on from generation to generation within a narrow circle of constitutional and ritual experts of the court, who were specially charged with the task of remembering precedents and being, as it were, the living archives of the realm. Dr. Vansina has worked with Father Kagame in Ruanda, but also among the Bakuba of the Kasai. Here he spent five years with a people numbering little more than 70,000, and he sought his information from no less than 2,000 individuals. Anything that was known by heart or that formed a stylised narrative he recorded on tape and later transcribed. He thus found himself with many versions of the most important texts, and by comparing the variants and relating them to the family histories of his informants he was able to construct not only a formidable critical apparatus but a history of the transmission of the texts themselves. Needless to say, the effort and the specialisation involved in work of this kind will prove daunting to all but the very few.

THE GRADUAL EMERGENCE of African scholars combining the relevant linguistic backgrounds with the technical historical qualifications may provide some new impetus. But if the work of a Bede is to be carried through before the bards die out in Africa, historians will need to work the continent during the next twenty years on something like the same scale as anthropologists have worked it in the last twenty.

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Walter Bagehot

By R. H. S. Crossman

THERE CAN BE very few studies of our parliamentary system that were so rapidly overtaken by events as Walter Bagehot's *The English Constitution*. First composed as a series of essays for *The Fortnightly*, it was published in book form in 1867—the very year of Disraeli's Reform Act which abruptly and finally ended the period of classical parliamentary government it describes. As an account of contemporary fact, the book was out of date almost before it could be reviewed. Since then we have had countless studies by political scientists and constitutional lawyers, interspersed occasionally with the reflections of a retired politician. Yet for anyone who wants to understand the workings of British politics—be he university student, foreign observer, or merely a curious elector—*The English Constitution* still remains the best introduction available.

What is the secret of this remarkable longevity, this timeless quality, in a book dashed off as a serial? Why has this boisterous account of Westminster in the middle of the last century become a classic, whereas the learned works of Lowell and Anson, of Berridale Keith and Jennings began to date and require revision as soon as they were published?[1] One reason why Bagehot's political writings are still so fresh and relevant is the very journalistic quality which prevented their importance being fully appreciated by his contemporaries. Lord Balfour was alluding to this when he remarked:

> His method can perhaps best be understood from a judgment which, in one of his essays, he passes on the author of an unsuccessful political biography, namely that he "did not look *closely and for himself* at real political life." Bagehot was not infallible. But he *did* practise his own precepts; he *did* look *closely and for himself at real political life*. Hence his ceaseless endeavours to discover how public business was in fact transacted, as distinguished from the way in which its transaction was officially described; hence the contempt with which this master of political writing regarded what he called the "literary" view of constitutional procedure.

Bagehot, in fact, was one of the greatest political journalists of his—or indeed of any age—equally skilled in the crafts of reporter, leader writer, or editor; and it was by eschewing literary pretensions and sticking to his trade that he achieved immortality. For it was in the course of describing the contemporary political scene, as he actually saw it, that he hit upon the secret of British politics—the difference between myth and reality, and also between the dignified and the efficient exercise of power.

The Making of a Journalist

BAGEHOT'S journalistic talents were first revealed when, just down from London University with a double First, he arrived in Paris in time to witness Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*. The seven letters he then composed must have scarified with their mixture of rollicking cynicism and cool analysis those respectable Unitarians who subscribed to *The Inquirer*. But they also displayed his extraordinary skill at seeing through the pretensions of politicians, and describing how their decisions were really taken. What made these letters so readable was the author's ability to enliven objective analysis with racy character sketches, and to startle his reader with conclusions nicely compounded of paradox and commonsense.

At first, however, Bagehot's ambitions were literary. In 1852 he resolved to follow his father's profession, and took charge of the London branch of the family bank, knowing that this would give him plenty of time to write. By the

[1] Bagehot himself realised that his book would stand or fall as a description of an epoch that was over. When a new edition was required in 1872 he saw that he must either write a new book or leave the text unamended. He chose the latter course and added a final chapter, and also an introduction.

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time he was 30, he was financially secure and beginning to be recognised as a budding literary critic. Together with his friend Hutton he owned and edited *The National Review*, and it was here that most of his literary essays of this period were published. It was not until 1856, that a visit to the home of James Wilson, Liberal politician, proprietor of *The Economist*, revealed to him where his real talents lay. Wilson, who had already decided that Hutton should be the new editor of his weekly, invited the young banker as well to write regularly for it. He also introduced him to his six daughters, and in 1859 Bagehot married the eldest of them, Eliza. Next year Wilson, who was a Liberal M.P. as well as a newspaper proprietor, was appointed Financial Member for India and named his son-in-law to act as director of *The Economist* in his absence overseas. Within a few months Wilson died in India; and in 1861, when his friend Hutton moved to *The Spectator*, Bagehot obtained the editorship of *The Economist*, a post he retained until his death in 1877.

Thus if Bagehot's natural talents as a journalist were great, his family connections gave him an almost unrivalled opportunity to display them. Thanks to his father he was enabled to portray Lombard Street from inside; thanks to his father-in-law he was given the entrée to the highest circles of Westminster and Whitehall.

For anyone who aspires to a thorough understanding of the City of London and of Westminster, there is no better training than a regular job on a "weekly." In addition to his special economic contributions, Bagehot usually wrote two political articles a week for *The Economist*, and he soon achieved the only kind of power that interested him. His journalism was designed, not merely to inform his readers but to influence politics; and since it clearly did so the politicians could not afford to leave him ill-informed.

From time to time he was tempted to enter politics. But fortune smiled on him by frustrating his political ambitions. In 1860 he was very nearly selected as a candidate for London University. In 1865 he was invited to contest Manchester, but after one frustrating public meeting he withdrew. Finally in 1866 he did fight a bye-election at Bridgwater. There he suffered the pangs of a candidate who is convinced that he has won and then sees the votes suddenly stacking up against him.

No one likes to be a "failed M.P." and Bagehot was no exception. But in all likelihood he was lucky to be rejected since he could hardly have combined a political career with the kind of writing that gave him such influence as an editor outside. Bagehot realised this, and apparently convinced himself that he would be content to remain a distinguished back-bencher. But, once elected, no personality as vivid as his would have remained content to pontificate from below the gangway, or in a corner of the smoking-room. Very soon at Westminster ambition corrodes detachment, and the will to power pushes aside the will to understand and to describe. Though Bagehot prided himself on the scepticism with which he watched the game of politics, he had a contempt for remote and indecisive intellectuals. At home in Somerset he was a vigorous sportsman, and in London he displayed an uninhibited enjoyment of society. In the Commons, where ambition is the normal motive of all except a small minority of individualists and non-conformists, he would soon have felt a conflict growing, between the deferential reticence required of the rising party politician and the witty revelations that had won him journalistic renown. Certainly life as an M.P. might have given added depth to his analysis of political behaviour, but only at the risk of blunting his powers of analysis and upsetting that balance between the inside knowledge and detached judgment which, in the case of *The English Constitution*, transformed his occasional journalism into a classic.

Towards the end of his life, Bagehot devoted one of his *Economist* articles to an attempt to strike a balance between the advantages and disadvantages of becoming an M.P. He listed the gains as three: social standing, a certain amount of power, and "the acquisition of much valuable knowledge... which can in no other way be learned so easily and perfectly.... Members of the House see the Parliamentary machine itself; literary people only judge of it, as it were, by plates and description." He then turns to the disadvantages, mentioning the heavy financial burden involved, and the cost in terms of time and fatigue, and concludes:

> An influential Member of Parliament has not only to pay much money to become such, and to give time and labour, he has also to sacrifice his mind too—at least all the characteristic part of it, that which is original and most his own.... A man who tries to enter Parliament must be content to utter common thoughts... and to some minds there is no necessity more vexing or more intolerable.

Bagehot and Mill

BAGEHOT was never content to utter common thoughts. Even in his regular stint of weekly journalism he continued to dazzle his readers, and at the same time to reveal to them new and unexpected insights into British politics. Here his political essays have something in common with Trollope's political novels. Trollope de-

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scribed British politics exclusively in terms of individual and social behaviour, Bagehot in terms of the management of men and the exercise of power. In both cases, however, run-of-the-mill work turned out to order is still read with profit because, while reflecting the surface glitter of Victorian politics, it also exposes the harsh realities behind the façade, forcing us a hundred years later to face the problems we ourselves are seeking to evade, and providing a sharp and sometimes merciless critique of the compromises by which we still try to-day and fail to resolve them.

Perhaps the best way of seeing why Bagehot's occasional journalism has outlasted works of far greater philosophic and literary pretensions is to compare *The English Constitution* with Mill's *Representative Government*—a treatise which covered much the same ground and was regarded with much more deference by his contemporaries. Published in 1861, *Representative Government* was at once accepted as an authoritative exposition of Liberal doctrine. Though he publicly always paid his respects to Mill, Bagehot's practical and sceptical mind could not but resent the ascendancy which this high-minded intellectual exerted over his whole generation.[2] To the author of Lombard Street, the influence on economic thinking of Mill's *Political Economy* seemed pernicious; taught to think in terms of its smooth abstractions, the student would find it more difficult to observe how the businessmen and bankers, who are the proper study of the political economist, really behave.

His attitude to *Representative Government* was very similar. He was irked by the uncritical acceptance which its analysis had received. This dislike is revealed in the very first sentence of *The English Constitution:*

> "On all great subjects," says Mr. Mill, "much remains to be said," and of none is this more true than of the English Constitution.... An observer who looks at the living reality will wonder at the contrast to the paper description.

These opening words had always seemed to me obscure and pointless until I re-read *Representative Government* and realised that Bagehot was replying directly to Mill and challenging his uncritical acceptance of the traditional "paper description" of the Constitution.

The suppressed vehemence of Bagehot's attack is all the more striking when we realise that the two men were very largely agreed about the aims and objects of representative government. Both were Liberals who welcomed unreservedly the transfer of power to the middle classes which had occurred since 1832. And they were in full agreement that the greatest threat to British freedom lay in an extension of the suffrage that would concede to the working class that "despotic power" which was still securely in the hands of "the bald-headed man at the back of the omnibus."

In the preface of the second edition, Bagehot expressed the fear that both men felt, with brutal frankness:

> that a political combination of the lower classes, as such and for their own objects, is an evil of the first magnitude; that a permanent combination of them would make them (now that so many of them have the suffrage) supreme in the country; and that their supremacy, in the state they now are, means the supremacy of ignorance over instruction and of numbers over knowledge. So long as they are not taught to act together, there is a chance of this being averted.

Although Mill called himself a democrat he was just as inflexibly opposed to what he described as "the tyranny of the majority." Indeed, as they both saw it, the one great issue of British politics in the 1860s was how to prevent the party politicians, for purely opportunist reasons, making concessions to democracy which would substitute government by ignorance and brute numbers for government by discussion.

Moreover, their agreement went one stage further. Mill held as strongly as Bagehot that one special threat to freedom was constituted by

[2] See J. M. Keynes' *Review of The Works and Life of Walter Bagehot*, in *Economic Review* (Vol. 25, p. 369 ff.)

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the radical demand for the transfer of executive authority to the House of Commons. In *Representative Government* he conceded that although Crown, Lords, and Commons are nominally invested with equal power, in fact the Commons—which represents the people's will—exerts "a substantial supremacy... and the powers which it leaves in hands not directly accountable to the people, can only be considered as precautions which the ruling power is willing should be taken against its own errors." But characteristically Mill at once nullified this bold declaration of democratic principle. "No body of men," he hastens to add, "unless organised and under command, is fit for action, in the proper sense." Popular assemblies should only control and criticise. Freedom will only be secured by "disjoining the office of control and criticism from the actual conduct of affairs, and devolving the former on the representatives of the Many, while securing for the latter... the acquired knowledge and practised intelligence of a specially trained and experienced Few."

In defining the powers of the House of Commons, Mill is chiefly concerned to emphasise what it cannot do well and what it should not try to do at all. It should *not* seek to administer or even to interfere in the selection of the administrators. It should *not* initiate legislation, least of all financial measures. But in addition to control and criticism, and providing the nation's committee of grievances, the Commons does have one very important function:

> It has never been thought desirable that Parliament should itself nominate even the members of a Cabinet. It is enough that it virtually decides who shall be Prime Minister.... Parliament decides... which of two, or at most three, parties or bodies of men, shall furnish the executive government; the opinion of the party itself decides which of its members is fittest to be placed at the head.

When we turn to Bagehot's pages on the same topic, we are struck by a superficial similarity. The functions, for example, listed in the chapter on the House of Commons coincide almost exactly with those listed by Mill; and this similarity extends to the treatment of the House of Lords. Both men realised that since the peers now represented merely the landed interest, they were no longer a true second chamber and should never be permitted to use their constitutional veto when the nation had clearly declared its will. In order to strengthen the House of Lords and restore its natural character, Bagehot accepted Mill's proposal for the creation of life peers drawn from men of outstanding ability and independence.

WHAT IS IT THEN that made Bagehot accuse Mill of mistaking "paper description" for the living reality? The answer is to be found in Bagehot's distinction between the Dignified and the Efficient parts of the Constitution, and the central role he allots to the Cabinet.

Of this there had not been a word in *Representative Government*. Mill relied on the old-fashioned notion of a division of power between the executive and the legislature, only re-defining it as a division between an elected Parliament and a bureaucracy selected by competitive examination and headed by Ministers responsible to Parliament. What he completely failed to see was that these Ministers banded together as the Cabinet formed the lynch pin of the Constitution, a new central authority which could manage the state. In the whole of *Representative Government* I can find only the one mention of the Cabinet which I have quoted. In Bagehot's eyes, this was Hamlet without the Prince.

Mill's failure to see "the efficient secret of the Constitution" led him quite logically to rely on electoral reform as the main bulwark against the tyranny of the majority. Bagehot devotes nearly a third of his chapter on the House of Commons to a withering attack on what he describes as "a ruinous innovation" which would strengthen the party machine outside Parliament, and so destroy both the independence of the individual Member and the moderation of the House of Commons—the two conditions he regarded as "essential to the bare possibility of parliamentary government." Electoral devices for excluding the working class from political power were, in his view, either futile or positively dangerous to the rule of the middle class. This could only be maintained by ensuring that all effective power and all important decisions were reserved to the efficient part of the Constitution, and simultaneously providing the working class with a standard of life which would make them content to remain loyal subjects of the Crown, effectively excluded from the secret of power.

"I fear you will laugh," he had written, describing Napoleon's *coup d'état*, "when I tell you what I conceive to be about the most essential mental quality for a free people, whose liberty is to be progressive, permanent, and on a large scale: it is much stupidity."

In *The English Constitution* he explains the nature of this stupidity.:

> Certain persons are by common consent agreed to be wiser than others and their opinion is, by consent, to rank for much more than its numerical value. We may in these happy nations weigh votes as well as count them, though in less favoured countries we can count only. But in free nations, the votes so weighed or counted must decide.

Bagehot was as afraid as Mill of the effects of

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universal suffrage. But he saw—as Mill did not see—that danger could not be averted by literacy tests, plural voting, proportional representation, and all the other devices recommended in *Representative Government*. The wise man, he held, will resist large extensions of the suffrage. But if this delaying action fails, he will realise that "the only effective security against the rule of an ignorant, miserable and vicious democracy, is to take care that the democracy shall be educated, comfortable, and moral."

Bagehot's refutation of Mill, the liberal reformer, has stood the test of time. Wherever proportional representation has been tried, it has fulfilled his prediction that it would undermine the independence of the M.P. and increase the powers of the party managers who control the electoral list. Nevertheless, one must add in fairness to Mill that on the central issue—whether it would be possible to combine government by discussion with universal suffrage, and to preserve British liberties in the "face of a political combination of the lower class"—Bagehot's predictions of disaster were even shriller than Mill's; and on two particular issues—female suffrage and the reform of the civil service by entry through competitive examination—Mill showed more foresight than his sceptical young critic.

New Model Utilitarian

IT IS NOW TIME to examine Bagehot's great discovery—"the efficient secret of the British Constitution." Like so many notable advances in human knowledge, this revelation seemed quite obvious once it had been stated and accepted as true. What was, when it was first published, a deeply shocking approach has long since become a standard technique of political science, and the secret which Bagehot dramatically revealed is now a commonplace of political discussion.

One way of making ourselves realise the originality of Bagehot's thought is to remind ourselves of what *was* the authorised theory of the Constitution, in order to observe how he shattered it. Another is to apply Bagehot's technique of analysis to the English Constitution of the 1960s. We can certainly learn a lot by projecting Bagehot forward into our own time, but only if we first—however briefly—make an attempt to see his discovery in terms of his own epoch.

In the 1860s, the standard accounts of the English Constitution were still the work of lawyers and historians who accepted the traditional division of powers—Queen, Lords, and Commons—at its face value. Moreover, everyone agreed that political philosophy should be concerned with "first principles." Conservative political theorists demonstrated how the Constitution derived from first principles; Liberal reformers showed what changes must be made in order to bring it into accord with first principles.

The first break in this traditional approach to the Constitution had been made long before, by Jeremy Bentham in his famous attack on Blackstone in 1776. When it was published, his *Fragment on Government* was as radical and shocking a document as Bagehot's *The English Constitution* 90 years later. By assuming that human beings are moved only by self-love, and that the main role of moral and political principles is to cover up "sinister interests," Bentham provided himself with an excellent instrument for smashing constitutional façades, and revealing the forces at work behind them. But this aggressive, critical phase of utilitarianism did not last very long. By the time that Bagehot came to London the utilitarian analysis that Bentham had first developed, as a technique for demolishing the religious and legal defences of aristocratic wealth and privilege, had been transformed by John Stuart Mill into a thoroughly respectable philosophy—complete with a fine new set of first principles.

No one can blame J. S. Mill for coming to the conclusion that utilitarianism—particularly as reformulated with perverse pedantry by his own father in his *Essay on Government*—had degenerated into dogma; or for realising, with ever-growing discomfort, that his father's case for representative government and universal suffrage was based on a blatantly false generalisation about human nature. In real life, no one has ever operated the "Felicific Calculus" or succeeded in behaving for very long in the way that James Mill had claimed that every human being is always bound to behave. Conceivably we ought to be guided by rational self-interest alone, but how seldom we succeed in behaving so sensibly!

If the Utilitarians' account of individual psychology was wrong, their argument for democracy needed just as drastic amendment. Its basic assumption was that there exists "a natural identity of interest" which ensures that if each citizen in a community and each group is consistently self-interested, the net result of their collective selfishness will be the greatest good of the greatest number. As a postulate for economic theory, this may possibly have been defensible, but as the operating principle of representative government it was plainly absurd.

It is to the credit of John Stuart Mill that he rebelled against parental inhumanity—in theory as well as in practice—and spent his life working out a revised Utilitarianism that took account of all that variety of passions, emotions, and

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ideals which his father had fed into that monstrous mental machine—the Felicific Calculus—so that they could be reduced to their lowest common denominator. Unfortunately, however, in the course of humanising Utilitarianism, J. S. Mill had introduced a whole string of contradictions and—even more serious—had blunted the cutting edge of its radical, social analysis. Under his hand it had become a defence of the new middle-class establishment, nearly as hypocritical and unconvincing as the system that Bentham had assailed 90 years before. What was needed therefore was a new critique of the Constitution based on an analysis as fearless as Bentham's, but more sophisticated. Walter Bagehot was ideally equipped for this task. He had none of J. S. Mill's philosophic pretensions, and he was a much more thorough-going sceptic than Bentham, who could never rid himself of his belief that man would be perfectible once kings and aristocracies had disappeared. With an amused contempt for reformers, and a positive dislike for intellectuals and theorists, Bagehot set out to succeed where the Utilitarians had so completely failed—to describe the English Constitution in terms, not of first principles but of the real behaviour of those who operate it.

In his New Model, Bagehot retained two basic assumptions of the old Utilitarians. Like them he held that there is nothing mysterious about government; it is simply a special kind of management—the management of those institutions which we call the State—and he also accepted the view that by and large the group which controls the State at any time will manage it in its own interests. But at this point his refinement of Bentham's analysis began. Unlike his predecessors he realised that, in all human activity, tradition and habit are at least as important motives as self-interest.

> The most intellectual of men are moved quite as much by the circumstances which they are used to as by their own will. The active voluntary part of a man is very small, and if it were not economised by a sleepy kind of habit its results would be annulled. We could not do every day out of our own heads all we have to do. We should accomplish nothing, for all our energies would be frittered away in minor attempts at petty improvement... so that when a crisis came requiring mass combination, no two men would be near enough to act together. It is the dull, traditional habit of mankind that guides most men's actions, and it is the steady frame in which each new artist must set the picture that he paints.

In this passage Bagehot disposed not only of utilitarian psychology but of a fallacy which still survives in a great deal of so-called progressive thought—the idea that in a democracy the educated citizen will be able to free himself from habitual attitudes and traditional loyalties, so that he can think things out for himself, and in each decision he takes can make up his own mind in terms of cool self-interest. Anyone who applies these precepts in his personal life runs the risk of a nervous breakdown; and the consequences for a nation which adopts this kind of atomised individualism as its pattern of political behaviour will be even more disastrous. In the nation, as in any other group, it is not the individual, thinking and acting for himself that normally settles an issue, but the force of habit and tradition, working through groups and associations. And this analysis remains equally true and relevant whether you are a Conservative trying to defend the *status quo* or a left-winger trying to change it. It is not individual self-interest but the inter-action of class interests and group interests that normally determines the politics of a free people.

But even this re-statement of Benthamism needs refinement. True enough a state managed by a landed aristocracy will primarily serve the landed interest, just as a state managed by the middle class will primarily serve the interests of business and industry. But an aristocratic government will not, as Bentham believed, be merely a façade to conceal class interests: it will also behave in accordance with a complete aristocratic tradition, including (in the case of Britain) a sense that the rulers virtually represent the common people excluded from power, a strong suspicion of the Executive and consequent opposition both to the Army and to centralisation of power, a love of individual liberty and a belief in government by discussion.

In the same way, a middle-class government will not be simply and solely concerned to promote business interests. The capitalists and entrepreneurs who had become the new ruling class since 1832 were not—as anybody could see who looked at them objectively—the inhuman self-interested money-makers that Benthamite doctrine assumed, and Charles Dickens portrayed in *Hard Times*. On the contrary they were just as much creatures of habit and tradition as the aristocracy. Moreover, as sensible businessmen who had to handle working people, they realised that just because the masses were less educated and less rational they were even more wholly creatures of habit and tradition. And that is why, concluded Bagehot, the middle class have not followed Bentham's precepts, sweeping away the old customs and institutions in order that "the people" can govern themselves. On the

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contrary, they have been very careful to reduce to a minimum the changes they have introduced in the workings of government. While they have been ready to modernise the "efficient parts" of the Constitution, the secret machinery of decision-taking, they have left virtually intact those "dignified parts—the Monarchy and the House of Lords—which though they are inefficient and cumbersome make a great impact on the public mind. Both these institutions still retain some of their old powers, as well as enjoying great public esteem; but sovereignty has passed to the business community which has established its new business-like board of management—the Cabinet—to run the nation's affairs.

This new Constitution, says Bagehot, is only the most recent stage in a long, historical process. For hundreds of years the efficient and the dignified parts of the Constitution were united in the person of the King. Britain was ruled by absolute monarchy—a type of government intelligible to the simplest minds which will normally evoke loyal allegiance from the masses. Then absolute monarchy was gradually replaced by constitutional monarchy, in which sovereignty was divided between the King and the landed aristocracy, with the House of Commons exerting some check as the representatives of the popular will. And finally in the years since 1832, constitutional monarchy had given way to "a disguised republic." The real secret, says Bagehot, of British representative institutions is that what were once "the appendages of a monarchy have been converted into the essence of a republic." This had been done by first separating the "dignified" and the "efficient" parts, and then welding them together so as to conceal from the masses the revolutionary shift of power that had taken place behind the constitutional façade.

> The English Constitution in its palpable form is this—the mass of the people yield obedience to a select few; and when you see this select few you perceive that though not of the lowest class, nor of an unrespectable class, they are yet of a heavy sensible class—the last people in the world to whom, if they were drawn up in a row, an immense nation would ever give an exclusive preference.
>
> In fact the mass of the English people yield a deference rather to something else than to their rulers. They defer to what we may call the *theatrical show* of society.... The apparent rulers of the English nation are like the most imposing personages of a splendid procession; it is by them the mob are influenced; it is they whom the spectators cheer. The real rulers are secreted in second-rate carriages; no one cares for them or asks about them; but they are obeyed implicitly and unconsciously by reason of the splendour of those who eclipsed and preceded them.

The Disguised Republic

By his distinction between the dignified and the efficient parts of the Constitution, and his assumption that the former are preserved in order to conceal and win allegiance to the latter, Bagehot had provided himself with just that precision-instrument of political analysis which Bentham and the Mills had lacked. With these two postulates as his working hypothesis, he found it possible to give a simple and rational description of how political power is actually distributed, and how decisions of state are really taken—finally reaching the conclusion that what had happened in the 30 years since the great Reform Bill was the transformation of a constitutional monarchy into a "disguised republic."

> The characteristic merit of the English Constitution is, that its dignified parts are very complicated and somewhat imposing, very old and rather venerable; while its efficient part, at least when in great and critical action, is decidedly simple and rather modern. . . . Its essence is strong with the strength of modern simplicity; its exterior is august with the Gothic grandeur of a more imposing age.

Bagehot's account of how the separate parts of the Constitution function is simple and elegant. In summarising it I use the present tense in order to emphasise once again that he was writing not as a learned historian or political scientist, but as a journalist describing the system as he saw it in 1865—two years before Disraeli ended the classic age of parliamentary government by enfranchising the urban working class. It is only when we see it in its contemporary setting that we can judge how true his model is, and make up our minds on the value of the new technique of political analysis that was used for the first time in its construction.

The Monarchy: By ceasing to be the efficient part of the Constitution, the Monarchy actually increases its strength. The Queen has lost most of her powers and prerogatives, including the veto and the right to order the dissolution of Parliament. But this separation of the Monarch from the actual business of government has elevated her above party strife and made her a symbol of national unity.

Bagehot lists four reasons for the increased strength of the Monarchy under the new Constitution. (1) It remains the most intelligible part of the political system for ordinary people who continue to believe the Queen is really sovereign, and take an interest in all her doings.

> A *family* on the throne is an interesting idea also. It brings down the pride of sovereignty to the level of petty life.... The women—one half of the human race at least—care fifty times more

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> for a marriage than a ministry.... A princely marriage is the brilliant edition of a universal fact, and, as such, it rivets mankind... a royal family sweetens politics by the seasonable addition of nice and pretty events. It introduces irrelevant facts into the business of government, but they are facts which speak to "men's bosoms" and employ their thoughts.

(2) The Monarchy strengthens government with the force of religion. The English people really feel themselves bound by the oath of allegiance, believe that the Queen rules by God's grace and accept that they have a mystic obligation to obey her. In order to preserve this religious bond, the Monarchy has to be kept aloof from ordinary people and "not be brought too closely to real measurement." It should be "commonly hidden like a mystery, and sometimes paraded like a pageant."

(3) The Queen as head of society and head of state is the centre of the pageantry that goes with that function, and (4) she and her family have also become the head of the nation's morality.

Bagehot emphasises that it is a mistake to assume that the Monarchy has lost all its power: no one in fact will know for many years after their death exactly how much the Queen and her Consort intervened secretly in cabinet government. But he is convinced that a wise ruler will not use even the limited power he still possesses, but will prefer to rely on the enormous influence that he can exert, as the one public servant who remains permanently at the centre of things while ministers come and go. The role of a Monarch in fact resembles that of the permanent head of a government department, with the one difference that a shrewd and experienced King, advising ministers from above, can have far more effect on their actions than civil servants briefing them from below.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS: Along with the Monarchy, the Peers have now joined the dignified part of the Constitution. Even before 1832 the House of Lords, says Bagehot, was the secondary chamber because the Dukes preferred to run the Commons indirectly by patronage, when the alternative was being bossed about in their own chamber by an upstart Lord Chancellor. Since then the effective power of the Lords has been curtailed even further: all they still retain is "a veto of delay... a power of revision," but it would be most unwise to look to them in any crisis as a bulwark against revolution. For this role they are disqualified by the fact that they are a sectional interest representing merely the landowners, and ignorant of all business except diplomacy. In order to revitalise the House of Lords and make it an effective second chamber, it will be necessary to end the dominance in it of the landed interest by the appointment of a large number of life peers, selected for their eminence and independence. Meanwhile, however, an unreformed House of Lords can be "useful if not quite necessary." It can, for example, "prevent the rule of wealth—the religion of gold"; help to check sinister interests especially in the Executive and, by merely continuing to exist without popular protest, provide "an index that revolution is unlikely."

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS: Although the Commons are now the efficient part of the Constitution, they too according to Bagehot have their dignified aspect. Indeed, one particularly admirable refinement of the new middle-class régime in England is the continued prominence of the aristocracy in the Commons:

> As long as we keep up a double set of institutions—one dignified and intended to impress the many, the other efficient and intended to govern the many—we should take care that the two match nicely, and hide where the one begins and where the other ends. This is in part effected by conceding some subordinate power to the august part of our polity, but it is equally aided by keeping an aristocratic element in the useful part of our polity.

Since government by public meeting is plainly impossible, the function of the Commons is neither to legislate nor to administer, but to elect a business-like board to rule the country and then keep an eye on its proceedings. Even this modest function of electing the Prime Minister who then selects his Cabinet would be beyond the powers of any normal club of some 500 members. The Commons can only fulfil it successfully thanks to two further inroads on their powers—the discipline effected by the party system and the Premier's right of dissolution.

In addition to their two main tasks of electing the Cabinet, and if necessary dismissing it, they do a number of useful jobs—keeping a check on the Executive, improving legislation, expressing the grievances of the public, etc., which had been correctly listed by J. S. Mill. But these functions are all of secondary importance. At the moment when a new House of Commons has been returned and is in the process of electing the Prime Minister, or at the height of a ministerial crisis, the Members of Parliament collectively exercise real sovereign power. Were the power to elect and dismiss the Cabinet to be taken from them, says Bagehot, the Commons would become a mere debating society and another "reservoir of ministers" like the House of Lords.

THE CABINET: Since the Monarchy and the Lords are now merely dignified parts of the Constitution, and the Commons has mainly an elective

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function, it is clear that effective power is normally concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister and his colleagues. The text-books may tell us that the safeguards of British freedom lie in the separation of three co-ordinated powers, the Monarchy, the Lords, and the Commons. But this theory of checks and balances (which operates—extremely badly—in the United States) is now a fiction in this country.

> The efficient secret of the English Constitution may be described as the close union, the nearly complete fusion, of the executive and legislative powers.

This fusion takes place in the Cabinet:

> A board of control chosen by the legislature, out of persons whom it trusts and knows, to rule the nation.... A Cabinet is a combining committee—a *hyphen* which joins, a *buckle* which fastens, the legislative part of the State to the executive part of the State. In its origin it belongs to the one, in its functions it belongs to the other.

Exactly how is this fusion of executive and legislative power achieved? The first answer to this question is to be found in the office of Prime Minister. Once elected by the Commons the Prime Minister exerts powers greater than those of any American President, since he it is who nominates the Ministry and selects the Cabinet over which he presides. In this new middle-class régime, in fact, the nation is run by a board of control headed by a powerful managing director. In the second place, the Cabinet from the moment it is created exerts a special control over the Commons. Constitutionally it is only the chief committee of the Commons. But the right of dissolution which it possesses transforms it into "an executive which can annihilate the legislature, as well as an executive which is the nominee of the legislature. It *was* made, but it *can* unmake; it was derivative in its origin, but it is destructive in its action."

The third factor which makes possible the fusion of executive and legislative power is the peculiar structure of the Cabinet itself. In *Representative Government*, Mill had loftily announced that committees are incapable of effective action or firm decisions: effective control of the modern state must be handed over to a tiny élite of well-qualified public servants, each with his own clearly defined field of responsibility, and the right to take decisions under the general supervision of a departmental minister. By explaining for the first time the workings of the Cabinet, Bagehot was able to prove Mill wrong. What holds a British Cabinet together and makes it truly efficient, he tells us, is a combination of party loyalty, collective responsibility, and secrecy. In departmental matters, ministers are individually responsible to Parliament, and play the role *vis-à-vis* their permanent civil servants that Mill had recommended. But on all the great decisions of state the Cabinet takes its decisions and acts collectively. In the secrecy of the Cabinet meeting, each member is free to express his views. But once the decision has been taken they are all automatically committed, by the doctrine of Cabinet responsibility, to support it in public.

Party loyalty and the secrecy of Cabinet proceedings—enforced in Bagehot's time by the absence of any minutes or agenda—provides the dissenting minority with the assurance that the contrast between their private arguments and their public support will never be revealed. Without this assurance, Mill would have been right and the Cabinet could never have become more than a weak committee of the Commons. But collective responsibility combined with the threat of dissolution have enabled the Cabinet to become master of the assembly that created it. The Commons can challenge a Minister for departmental incompetence and sometimes destroy him; but a minister departmentally responsible for a Cabinet decision cannot be pulled down in this way—unless the Commons are prepared to face the resignation of the whole Cabinet and the threat of dissolution.

The collective responsibility of the Cabinet, therefore, is the element that actually fuses the executive and legislative. In so doing, it sharply reduces the interference of the Commons in the affairs of the executive, enables ministers to protect their departments from the "incessant tyranny of Parliament over the public offices," and preserves for the Cabinet the initiative in legislation. Indeed the one disadvantage of the system is the frequency with which the Cabinet has to be reconstructed, often at the cost of replacing an experienced minister who is doing a good job by an ignoramus. But ministers are not there to give expert supervision, only to represent the general public. Under the Cabinet system, government by discussion is assured. But the price we pay for this freedom is a certain amount of bureaucratic incompetence.

Presidential and Cabinet Government

How does the English Constitution compare with other systems of representative government? In 1865, most of Europe is still under absolute monarchy, and Napoleon III is ruling in France. So the only serious rival to Britain's "disguised republic" are the overt republican institutions of the U.S.A. Bagehot has no doubt whatsoever which country is better governed. But the difference between the two

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systems, he points out, is not, as is commonly suggested, that between constitutional monarchy and presidential government. If we mean by presidential government, government by an elective first magistrate, then we in England have a president as truly as the Americans.

But there are vital differences between the two presidential systems, and the first lies in the method of election. The American President is no longer elected by the college designed by the Founding Fathers for that purpose. This has become a constitutional fiction, and the President is now elected by wire-pullers, manipulating the mass popular vote. In England, on the other hand, the House of Commons retains the function of an electoral college, and after he has been elected our first magistrate remains responsible to Parliament. This difference, says Bagehot, affects the whole tone of politics.

> Under a Presidential government, a nation has, except at the electing moment, no influence . . . it must wait till its instant of despotism again returns. It is not incited to form an opinion like a nation under a Cabinet government. . . . There are doubtless debates in the legislature, but they are prologues without a play. There is nothing of a catastrophe about them; you cannot turn out the Government. The prize of power is not in the gift of the legislature, and no one cares for the legislature.

The House of Commons, on the other hand, is a true electoral college which, after it has elected the Cabinet, continues to check all its actions and "seats and unseats ministries from day to day." That is why its debates are listened to by the whole nation.

> Human nature despises long arguments which come to nothing—heavy speeches which precede no motion—abstract disquisitions which leave visible things where they were. But all men heed great results, and a change of Government is a great result . . . debates which have this catastrophe at the end of them—or may so have it—are sure to be listened to. . . .

Cabinet government has one further advantage over Presidential government. In the United States the Cabinet is merely a collection of advisers and assistants responsible only to the President. In Britain it acts collectively and, as we have seen, is collectively responsible to the Commons. And this kind of modern, simple, efficient board of control is only possible where the separation of powers sanctified under the American Constitution is replaced by the fusion of powers which remains the secret of the British system.

MONARCHY IS A SECOND BEST. Is Cabinet government a system which a business community anywhere in the world can adopt, or is it a peculiarly British institution which has developed as a result of the special conditions of our history? Would our disguised republic work equally well if it was separated from the dignified parts of the constitution, and therefore revealed as a real republic? On this point, Bagehot is in two minds. No one has ever described more brilliantly than he the importance of the Monarchy as a bulwark against violent change, a symbol of national unity that will preserve the deferential attitude of the masses. But if he fears what he describes as the "bovine stupidity" of the people, he is equally afraid that the Monarchy will relapse into its bad old days, and the Queen be succeeded by a middle-aged dilettante who will meddle in politics and do desperate damage. Monarchy, he realises, cannot exercise its spell over the mass and win their allegiance to the state, without retaining its power to destroy the state as well as to protect. If a wise Queen can do untold good, a silly or vicious Prince can cause a catastrophe. And in a hereditary royal family, the chances that the reigning Monarch will be silly or vicious are too high to be viewed with equanimity.

The only justification, therefore, for retaining Monarchy is the condition of the people.

> We have in a great community like England crowds of people scarcely more civilised than the majority of two thousand years ago; we have others, even more numerous, such as the best people were a thousand years since. . . . Those who doubt should go out into their kitchens. Let an accomplished man try what seems to him most obvious, most certain, most palpable in intellectual matters, upon the housemaid and the footman, and he will find that what he says seems unintelligible, confused, and erroneous—that his audience think him mad and wild when he is speaking what is in his own sphere of thought the dullest platitude of cautious soberness.

It is these "plain facts" which have rendered necessary the retention of the dignified elements in the Constitution, and the conscious concealment from the mass of the people of how the Cabinet system really works.

But is there no alternative to reliance on this kind of organised deception that Plato had first suggested in his *Republic*, the myth of the noble lie? Might it not be possible by means of universal suffrage, education, and improved living standards to instil into the mass of the population the "heavy sensible qualities of the middle class"? Bagehot was not a man who indulged in prophecy. He was concerned to describe what he actually saw; and in 1865 he is certain that the British people are unfit for parliamentary institutions based on universal suffrage. It is commonsense, therefore, to restrict the suffrage as far as possible, and to rely on the dignified

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parts of his disguised republic to continue their job of mass deception.

But when he looks outside Britain, Bagehot is not so pessimistic.

> Where there is no honest poverty, where education is diffused and political intelligence is common, it is easy for the mass of the people to elect a fair legislature. The idea is roughly realised in the North American colonies of England, and in the whole free States of the Union.

Nations of this kind do not need the trappings of monarchy. What is wrong with the United States is not the absence of a dignified element in the Constitution, but the cumbersome Presidential system and the frustrating division of powers with which they have been saddled in their written Constitution. "If the New England States," Bagehot concludes, "possessed a Cabinet government as a separate nation, they would be as renowned in the world for political sagacity as they are now for diffused happiness."

So the conclusion is clear. The essential virtues of the Cabinet system do not derive from the special conditions of British historical development. The system indeed is an invention of the British middle class, which can and should be exported to any country where the business community is dominant and the mass of the people literate and comfortable enough to use the vote in order to give their betters authority. The mass deception of Monarchy is not indispensable. On the contrary, the disguised republic is a second-best, justified only by the low mentality and deplorable living standards of the mass of the people.

Plato and Marx

WHEN WE MOVE from description to assessment, it seems to me that there are three questions that require an answer. First, was Bagehot's analysis—in particular his distinction between the realities and the appearances of British politics—a sound one? Secondly, was *The English Constitution* a correct account of how our political system was working a hundred years ago? Thirdly, is Cabinet government, as Bagehot described it, still "the secret of our Constitution"? If it is not, what has taken its place?

In searching for the answer to the first question, it is necessary to draw attention to one important confusion which runs through all Bagehot's political writings, and flawed what otherwise seems to me a faultless piece of social analysis. This flaw is an ambiguity in his concept of "the efficient secret," and in the distinction he draws between the "dignified" and the "efficient" parts of the Constitution. Bagehot could never quite make up his mind whether he was a historian describing a process of development that had been going on since 1832, or whether it was his real purpose to recommend to the new middle-class rulers of the country a Machiavellian piece of social engineering. Sometimes he is content to develop his thesis, about the role of tradition and habit in preserving popular respect for ancient institutions after effective power has moved elsewhere, and to note how convenient this is to political stability. But there are quite a number of passages in which he seems to have quite a different purpose—one not so dissimilar from that of Plato when he wrote the *Republic*.

Plato's primary concern was philosophic. But because he was convinced that Greek civilisation was being destroyed by democracy, he was also passionately interested in teaching an élite of young aristocrats how to establish a city state immune to its debilitating effects. The *Republic* is a description of how the Guardians of Civilisation should be educated. Plato wastes little time on discussing the schooling which the subject classes would require. Their main political characteristic, he tells us, will be a deferential willingness to accept the rule of their superiors. And in order to induce this deference he invented the myth of the "Noble Lie," which told the citizens that they were born either of golden, silver, iron, or copper parents; and that if the state is not to perish these classes must remain fixed for ever, so that power remains securely in the hands of the golden class of Guardians.

The meaning of the myth is clear. Good government depends on the discovery of some device for inducing into the masses a respect for their superiors, and persuading them not to use the power of the majority in order to overthrow law and order. It is the main task of political science, Plato says, to work out the technique through which the acquiescence of the many to the rule of the few can be achieved.

If anyone had ever asked Bagehot point-blank whether he accepted the doctrine of the Noble Lie, I am pretty sure that he would have brushed aside the notion that, when he wrote *The English Constitution*, he was trying to organise an open conspiracy and equip its members with a new technique of government. Nevertheless, the Platonic aim is there in the book. Of course the converts to Bagehot's doctrine would be called nothing as high-falutin' as Guardians. But he undoubtedly felt that the new middle class—unsure of itself and ignorant of the art of politics—needed to be shocked out of its complacency and confronted with the problems of power. But he did not *always* think in this way, and frequently reverted to the role of the amused and amusing spectator. Throughout *The English Constitution*, indeed, he wavers between two views of political science, treating it some-

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times as a strictly descriptive discipline, and sometimes as a practical study of a New Machiavelli.

Whenever he took this second view and began to peddle his ingenious contrivances for containing the masses, Bagehot relapsed into the fallacies which he had exposed and rejected in the Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill. He had seen clearly enough that what invalidated their concept of society, as a mere collection of self-interested individuals and groups, was its disregard for habit and tradition. Yet there are passages of *The English Constitution* where he falls into the same trap.

It is in his treatment of Monarchy that this becomes most obvious. At the end of an admirable analysis of how and why the strength of the Monarchy had increased since 1832, he adds this paragraph:

> Lastly, constitutional royalty ... acts as a *disguise*. It enables our real rulers to change without heedless people knowing it. The masses of Englishmen are not fit for an elective government; if they knew how near they were to it, they would be surprised, and almost tremble.

Did he really mean that when Lord John Russell was replaced by Lord Palmerston as Premier, the mass of the people were unaware of the fact? Or was he suggesting that on hearing the news they came to the conclusion that the Queen had merely changed the servant through whom she gave her orders? It would be tempting to dismiss this passage as a temporary aberration. But there are many others. Here is one of them:

> The poorer and more ignorant classes—those who would feel most excitement, who would most be misled by excitement—*really believe that the Queen governs*. You could not explain to them the recondite difference between "reigning" and "governing"; ... the ideas necessary to comprehend it do not exist in their minds. ... [My italics.]

From such passages it is clear that in certain moods Bagehot did regard the Monarchy as a contrivance for exploiting the "bovine stupidity" of the people and keeping them deferential.

> There *are* nations in which the numerous unwiser part wishes to be ruled by the less numerous wiser part. The numerical majority—whether by custom or by choice, is immaterial—abdicates in favour of whoever its *élite* may confide in ... it has a kind of loyalty to some superior persons who are fit to choose a good government. ...
>
> England is the type of deferential countries, and the manner in which it is so, and has become so, is extremely curious. The middle classes—the ordinary majority of educated men—are in the present day the despotic power in England.

The "despotic power" of the middle class has a familiar ring. It reminds us of Karl Marx's theory of class war. And the reminder is apt, since Marx and Bagehot agree that economic class is the determining factor in the structure of government. If we eliminate verbal differences, we can list the following principles to which they both adhere.

> In a modern capitalistic state, effective power is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeois class.
>
> Representative institutions are a form of government deliberately contrived to maintain the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.
>
> The stability of this political superstructure requires that the people should be kept deferential. They must never be permitted to realise what power lies in their hands. They must be hoodwinked by rituals; their ideals harnessed to harmless cults and their patriotism twisted into allegiance to a Monarchy remodelled to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

In compiling this list of agreed principles, I have preferred to use Marxist clichés. But underneath the difference of language and ideology, there is a very remarkable resemblance between Bagehot's theory of class politics, and Marx's theory of class war. Nor should we be unduly surprised that the Liberal reactionary and the Communist revolutionary were in such cynical agreement about the differences between appearance and reality in British politics, and the ingenious contrivances by which the real power of the business community is concealed from the public eye. After all, both had been trained by years of practical journalism to take nothing in politics at its face value. Both were political economists in a period when the social sciences were still in their infancy, and when there was no separation between politics and economics which could prevent them describing the whole structure of the new capitalist society arising before their eyes. And they were both studying exactly the same society in exactly the same epoch—Britain in the 1850s and 1860s. The first volume of *Das Kapital* was published in the same year as *The English Constitution*—1867.

I MYSELF AM IN NO DOUBT that Marx and Bagehot together provide far the most original and perceptive investigation of classical free enterprise and classical parliamentary government. If their accounts read very differently, this is because Marx constructed his analysis within a Hegelian framework, whereas Bagehot dismissed speculative philosophy as pretentious nonsense.

Nevertheless, despite this difference in their intellectual backgrounds, they shared a fervent and rather uncritical belief in the powers of social science. Both were products of an age when it seemed certain that, within a few

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decades, all the problems of society could be resolved by the application to them of the methods of applied science and applied technology. And it is because they shared this belief that their analyses of the relationship between economics and politics, and between class and government, sometimes fall into the same fallacies. Both men were too ready to accept simple mechanistic accounts of how political and social institutions "really work"; and too optimistic about the possibility of discovering the scientific laws which determine historical development. As a result, both succumbed to the temptation to "explain" politics in terms of class-struggle. Politicians, as Marx and Bagehot both realised, when they were criticising other writers, very rarely take decisions which settle anything, far less change the course of history. What happens in politics is far more often the result of impersonal forces than of the activity of individuals or groups working according to rational and previously articulated plans. Of course, human will and personality do have an important and sometimes a decisive effect—but always within limits set by forces outside their control. And it is the task of the journalist, social scientist, and historian to separate these elements giving each its correct importance.

A hundred years ago, when history-writing and social science were both in their infancy, there was a natural temptation to accept no fact on trust, to dismiss conventional chronicles as legends, and to look for "the real forces" whose operation these facts and legends concealed. The theory that politics could be explained in terms of a secret struggle of classes was the kind of hypothesis that was bound to attract the early social scientists. It seemed so rational and modern to assume that any political or economic crisis can be explained if we look behind the official record and the economic forces at work. Moreover, history becomes much more dramatic if we are able to tear away the conventional record, and reveal a secret struggle for survival waged according to a previously unknown scientific law.

Bagehot and Marx were fully justified when they shocked their contemporaries by exposing for the first time the importance of economic class in British politics, and trying to explain the precise relationship between political and economic power in the modern state. What vitiated both their accounts was their inclination to oversimplify the conflict, and to interpret the development of representative institutions and the working of the parliamentary system as a Machiavellian conspiracy of the bourgeoisie.

In this respect Marx was far the worse offender, and successive generations of Marxists have repeated his mistakes. Instead of recognising the middle-class ascendancy of the 1850s which Marx described as a unique and transient phenomenon of mid-19th-century Britain, they concluded from this one instance that democracy must always be a mere superstructure, and that its operation must always be determined by class forces. When Marx described democracy as "the executive committee of the bourgeoisie" his phrase precisely fitted the existing facts, and chimed with Bagehot's account. But later it was turned into an article of faith, and for a hundred years Marxists suppressed every fact which did not fit it.

In Britain, the influence of Marx—at least until the 1930s—was negligible, and the class analysis of society was employed not as an instrument of revolution but as part of the defence of the *status quo*. It was Bagehot, in fact, not Marx who set the pattern. And the main stereotype he left on the English mind was the contrast he drew between the cleverness of our rulers, who really understand how to manage politics, and the ineptness of the common people who were not born or trained to rule.

Was there ever any truth in this stereotype? The first part of it has been controverted by no one more effectively than by Bagehot. In essay after essay he demonstrated what a disadvantage it is in British politics to be interested in ideas, or concerned with principles. In the person of Lord Althorp, he painted the picture of the ideal British statesman:

> (A leader's mind) ought to be like a reserve fund—not invested in showy securities, but sure to be come at when wanted, and always of staple value. And this Lord Althorp's mind was; there was not an epigram in the whole of it; everything was solid and ordinary. Men seemed to have trusted him much as they trust a faithful animal, entirely believing that he would not deceive if he could, and that he could not if he would.

When he was not describing the Cabinet as an ingenious contrivance, Bagehot saw more clearly than anyone that the British ruling classes would never tolerate a Machiavelli for long, and that its real strength was not cleverness or clarity of thought, but its sense of tradition which is shared with the common people, and its native ability to know the time for firmness and the time for concession.

"An acquiescent credulity," he remarked of Sir Robert Peel, "is a quality of such men's nature. They cannot help being sure that what everyone says is true."

So when Bagehot talked as though the Monarchy was a contrivance, and the Cabinet was a mechanism whose working had been deliberately concealed, he was being false to the understanding of the British ruling class which

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made him the outstanding political journalist of his time. If the Monarchy had ever been used —as Bagehot said it should be used—by men who saw through its rituals and only wanted to dupe the masses, its magic power would have been punctured at once. The myths and legends of a Monarchy are only credible to the masses so long as those who propagate them believe their own propaganda. What gives the British Monarchy its unique strength is the fact that the court, the aristocracy, and the church—not to mention the middle classes—are just as devout worshippers of it as the masses.

And the same applies to the "efficient secret" of the Constitution. Years after Cabinet government had become an anachronism, its legend was being spread with utter sincerity by the Privy Counsellors and permanent civil servants who, if Bagehot's Machiavellian theory of politics had been correct, should have been contriving the next secret mechanism, for denying to the mass of the people knowledge of where power resides. Indeed I am tempted to reverse Bagehot's stereotype and to assert that the secret of our political stability is the deferential attitude of our rulers, and the fact that the astringent scepticism which corrodes reverence for authority is only to be found among the masses on the sidelines of politics.

(*A second and concluding part of this essay will be published next month.*)

Conger

An hour since, you lay coiled in your inheritance;
The broken spars of a sunken Spanish orange-boat,
The manor you won when you weighed a mere forty pounds.
There you lived alone, eating all spies and intruders,
Hidden down among the cold chryselephantine stones.

You have teeth like the spikes on a barrel-organ drum:
That necrologic gape closed its horny doors of knives
On the hebete like the Iron Maid of Nuremburg.
You have the limbless streamlining of the latest cars.
Your tiny scales are apt, like a wrestler's tiny eyes.

Now you lie dead. On the bottom boards you lie dead.
This is how things should be.

Ted Walker

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THEATRE

Fun with Fission

By Nigel Dennis

ALL SORTS of pleasant memories are associated with Herr Friedrich Dürrenmatt's last play to be seen in London, *The Visit*. It had the Lunts in it—always such a pleasure; it was directed by Mr. Peter Brook—another pleasure; it was a good play—an incredible pleasure. And the theatre in which it was put on, The Royalty, was almost the greatest pleasure: it was a brand-new theatre, with roomy bars, comfy seats, and only a reasonable amount of vulgarity in its style of carpetings and upholstery—yes, altogether a pleasing business, and we well remember how large and dignified the programme was, with fine photographs and biographical sketches of everyone connected with the play except the author, and quite a long prose-poem about the owner of the theatre and how much he loved culture and what a keen patron of the arts he was, and so on. Unfortunately, once *The Visit* had finished its run, The Royalty was turned into a cinema, so this is the first opportunity we have had to tell the owner how sorry we are that he was obliged to cut his cultural visit so short. We have no idea why he made the theatre into a cinema, but we do know that there is, apparently, some archaic byelaw or London County Council regulation under which a man may build a theatre but not a movie-house; but having built a theatre he may change it into a movie-house later—which is what the owner of The Royalty did. We think this byelaw, or regulation, should be changed, and we say so on compassionate grounds. Think how humiliating it must be for a man who simply wants to make money out of a movie-house to have to start by building a theatre, staging a whole play and even declaring himself publicly a patron of the arts! Then, having got his cinematic pleasure-dome at last, what is he to say if some rough type comes along and says: "Sir, I don't think you are an art-lover at all. I think you are just artful"? Nothing distresses a businessman more than to be accused of doing things for money.

But never mind; we have forgotten who the man was, and he has probably forgotten what *The Visit* was. Oddly enough, it was a play about money—a horrifying story about the way even the nicest people will stop at nothing, even murder, to get their hands on a bit of hard cash. The shape in which the author cast his story was extremely ingenious, and the way he told it and the neatness of his dramatic mind were quite on a par with his ingenuity. But *The Visit* was treated with a good deal of scorn by some people, who thought it was thin, brittle, superficial, and cynical—all of which it was, to some extent, but still a very exciting play and capable of giving one a very sharp shock. One of the interesting things about it was that it posed the question of what and how much an author can leave out of a play and still make it a good play of its kind.

All plays must leave out certain facts of life and aspects of human nature: there is not room in a play for everything, nor does the nature of the form demand that there should be. We do not, for instance, ask for the element of probability in a farce, or in a light comedy. We do not expect restraint and common-sense in a tragedy; for if they were present there would be no tragedy. In brief, we expect an author to leave bits of human nature out—to present an artificial concoction rather than a true-to-life one. We ask only that he make this artifice seem plausible; that is to say, if he does his work well, we should not notice the elements he has left out—and the more we *do* notice their absence, the more unimpressed we are by his skill. Of course, we value most highly the dramatists who manage to include the maximum of elements with the minimum of clumsiness; for we reckon, quite correctly, that a play is both more plausible and more interesting if the characters involved in it are full, like Brutus, of mixed elements and must struggle inside themselves to reach conclusions and perform big actions: this is at least partly what we mean when we say that Shakespeare embraces all humanity, or that characters are "whole" persons rather than bitty cut-outs. When things are made too plain-sailing for char-

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acters—when they represent only ambition, or only pride, or only greed, and have no opposites to these in them to make decisions hard for them—then we may accept them as absurd or melodramatic characters, or even as a certain sort of stylised peculiars, but we cannot respond to them as fully as we can to Macbeth, or Lear, or Tartuffe, or the people in Chekhov. They are doubtful to us because they have no doubts themselves.

SUCH WAS the case with the characters in *The Visit*. The author undertook to prove that a whole village of people would agree to murder a man in return for becoming rich. This was a very difficult thing to prove, because although a whole village might agree to evade a byelaw or L.C.C. regulation for the sake of greed, or even agree to murder one of their number out of sheer terror and a desire for self-survival, it is not easy to show them voting unanimously to kill a friend for money. To argue that people would do so is very cynical indeed; but cynicism in the theatre is not a moral problem but a technical one. It is easy enough to talk cynically in everyday life and build up a snug reputation for it, but it requires immense skill and audacity to argue purely cynically in a public place or in a printed book, because this involves leaving out, or dismissing, most of the nicer aspects of human behaviour, and their absence is almost sure to be felt by the audience, who thereupon refuse to credit the play. It can still be a good play, nonetheless, for it can be taken simply as a parable or a pretty homily; but its best quality will still be that of good melodrama or good farce.

Herr Dürrenmatt did his cynical work so well that he very nearly made it plausible. He showed himself to be a first-rate juggler, performing his cynical tricks so cleverly and quickly and in such full view that one was too full of admiration for his skill to notice the elements he had got round or ignored. Finally, he very nearly clinched his case by seeming to abandon it: agreeing that the villagers would never be so villainous as to murder their friend deliberately for money, he proceeded to show that they would kill him and get their money nonetheless, by the simple process of convincing themselves that their real object was the good of humanity. And yet, by the end, even this expedient of hypocrisy was not enough: one was left applauding the parable but discrediting the author's intellectual capacity.

IN HIS NEW PLAY, *The Physicists*, Herr Dürrenmat not only confirms his dramatic skill but causes us to worry even more about the quality of his thinking. If he were content to regard his new play as a mere exercise or melodramatic parable, we should be glad to take it as such—to enjoy its wit, its tricks, its surprises, and not bother much about its profundity. But Herr Dürrenmatt himself refuses to allow us to take him lightly; we must reckon with him as a philosopher who has thought deeply on the subject of atomic fission. To help us take him seriously, he has appended to his play no less than twenty-one observations, or propositions. Here are the first five:

(1) My point of departure is not the illustration of an idea but the telling of a story.
(2) If a man's point of departure is the telling of a story, then that story must be thought out to its conclusion.
(3) A story is thought out to its conclusion only when it has taken the worst possible turn.
(4) The worst possible turn is unforeseeable. It comes about by accident.
(5) The art of the dramatist consists in making the accidental enter into the action as effectively as possible.

Are these propositions very encouraging? Nos. 1 and 2 are harmless enough, but what of 3, 4, and 5? Why is a story thought out to its conclusion only when it has taken "the worst possible turn": are stories so dogmatic? Why is the worst possible turn "unforeseeable" and why does it come about "by accident": the assassination of Cæsar is not an accident but a calculated plot and the danger of it—though not, admittedly, the complicity of Brutus—is foreseen by everybody. No. 5 is a little more tolerable in that it applies strongly to melodrama, but the playwright who swears by it is merely concentrating his attention on one of the most mechanical aspects of "the art of the dramatist."

The remaining sixteen propositions are neither better nor worse than the first five: they include such large statements as "What concerns all can only be resolved by all"; "Reality makes its appearance in paradox"; "Dramatists can no more avoid paradox than logicians," and so on. One must not object, of course, to dramatists twining themselves round propositions: if they find them helpful to good play-writing, let them twine as they please. The difficulty is for the critic not to pay any attention to these maxims: distressed by what strikes him as mere pomposity, he may approach the play itself with a bias. Fortunately, Herr Dürrenmatt prevents this by making the intellectual fibre of his play out of the same stuff as his propositions. It seems an unusually woolly stuff. In fact, it seems quite negligible. It seems to be there only as a kind of make-weight—to give an excellent melodramatist the appearance of a formidable philosopher.

Herr Dürrenmatt shows us three doors in an

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expensive sanatorium. Out of the first door steps a mad physicist who thinks he is Sir Isaac Newton. Out of the second door steps a second atomic looney who thinks he is Albert Einstein. Out of the third door, a third looney, who thinks that King Solomon is his personal adviser. Six months previously, Newton, a delightful man, has strangled his nurse. When the curtain rises on Act 1, Einstein, a great one for fiddling, has just strangled his nurse. When the curtain descends on Act 1, the third physicist, a quiet but kindly type, has just strangled his nurse. The police are in despair and even the hunchbacked woman-doctor who runs the hospital, and is mad too, feels that things are getting out of hand.

What a rollicking start! And how it runs—brisk, witty, and entirely farcical. Then comes Act II, to pile on more melodrama yet. Newton and Einstein prove to be relatively sane: each is the atomic secret agent of a foreign power—in fact, to face the platitude squarely, one lunatic represents America and the other, Russia. The aim of each is to kidnap the third physicist, who has discovered the secret of life—or something like that. The mad hunchback, who represents the monied interest, or something like that, discovers the plot and all three physicists are condemned to stay in the looney-bin forever.

THE EVENING was so pleasant and the acting and the direction so good that we hate to spoil things by suggesting that the play is entirely frivolous. *The Physicists* requires the atomic bomb much as *Sweeny Todd* requires a straight-edged razor and *Trilby* the Evil Eye, but it is no more thoughtful, really, than these melodramas. All it tells us about atomic scientists is that their work may be fatal to humanity; that they are not in touch with reality; that they prefer isolation to human contact. All it tells about power-politics and money is entirely trite —sort of vintage *New Statesman* stuff. Finally, if we compare Herr Dürrenmatt's use of insanity with Shakespeare's, Strindberg's, or Pirandello's, we find that he does not really use it at all, except to illustrate the idea that abuse of knowledge is the quintessence of madness. There is no more thoughtfulness in *The Physicists* than there is, say, in Sartre's *Altona*: there is amusement, jokes, masquerade, "accident," and a crude sort of "paradox," but there is no trace of any thesis that demands the support of 21 propositions. One looks back on the play with admiration for what Herr Dürrenmatt can make a stage do—how nicely he can contrive situations, how good he is at making the machine run, how competent at glossing over the elements he leaves out. As a constructor of exciting, thoughtless mechanisms we must rank him certainly with Sartre and Brecht: he has just their ability to see one small, dim, paper moon of thought in the distance and build a stunning, striking piece of machinery to chase it in. It is well worth while being taken for a ride in this shiny flying-machine: it reminds one of the excellent typewriters and coffee machines they are making on the Continent nowadays. Or a Swiss watch that can cry "Cuckoo!"

Alone

Alone is a mind in a room with a ticking clock
Or footsteps on a wet pavement beneath cold street lights.
Alone is a wind amongst the tombstones of a sleeping city,
The sound of car tyres on a wet road.
Alone is a time of memories and anticipation,
Of moonlight on the sea and sunrise.
Alone is uncertainty.
Do I know people, are there other people, will I know people.
I am alone. An island in time,
Smoking a cigarette which no-one else will smell:
Listening to the death of seconds unknown to anyone else.
Alone is a time unshared, except in the telling of it.

Rod Stuart

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FILM

In Defence of Cinema Art

By Francis Wyndham

IN HIS ARTICLE *Priests of the Highbrow Cinema*, published in the January issue of ENCOUNTER, Nicola Chiaromonte accuses what he calls "intellectualistic" film directors of attempting to use cinematic images as if they were words "pregnant with profound, if vague, meanings instead of employing them to create the illusion of a real event." "There is no escape," he writes, "from the essential simple-mindedness of the movies." This patronising attitude is itself an "intellectualistic" platitude: the don who only likes Westerns and wouldn't be seen dead at a "foreign" film is in England a familiar (if somewhat dated) figure. The implication is that the cinema should keep its place as an elementary, even primitive art form, fit only to purvey factual information or entertainment of an undemanding and relaxing kind; that it should not try to ape its betters by hoping "to express ideological or lyrical meaning." Of course Chiaromonte is right when he suggests that a film which tries *literally* to be a poem or an intellectual discourse is undertaking a hopeless task, just as a novel can never achieve the effect of music; but he is wrong to assume that the "priests of the highbrow cinema" are necessarily aiming at results already patented by other forms of art. What they are trying to do (with varying degrees of success) is to define and explore the potentialities peculiar to films. These have only recently been acknowledged, but there is no reason why they should not be as great as those of any other medium for artistic expression.

Chiaromonte opens his article with the words: "A footprint on the sand is the *sign* of a man's passage. The cross is the *symbol* of Christianity." Here he seems to refute his own argument in advance, for the cross is an *image*, the visual presentation of which in various contexts can convey as many subtle shades of meaning as the use of the word "cross" in a poem. It has often been successfully exploited in films to achieve emotional and intellectual overtones: a recent example was the flick-knife disguised as a crucifix in Buñuel's *Viridiana*. He goes on:

> A word is a sign only when it is used in a strictly utilitarian way—to indicate or command. In other cases words, even though they have a precise meaning, change with their context.... A word, then, can be a symbol. A photograph, however, can only be a sign, an unequivocal sign of the passage of a material object before the camera-eye.

This is unconvincing; there is nothing unequivocal about a photograph. Simple proof of this was unintentionally provided on television not long ago, when two different programmes on the same day used identical sequences from newsreels of World War I. In one, musical accompaniment and commentary succeeded in producing an uplifting and patriotic effect; in the other, the effect was exactly the opposite—a bitter indictment of the horror of war.

MOVIES ARE CREATED, not in the studio or on location, but in the cutting-room. Photographs are the director's raw material. When he edits these—cutting up strips of celluloid and piecing them together again—he has the same chance of creating a work of art as the writer has when he organises words on the page, the painter when he applies his brush to the canvas, the composer when he exploits the resources of musical instruments. Any "still" from his film can be modified or transformed by the images that precede and succeed it in the same way that a word, a brush-stroke, a note in music are dependent on context for significance. In practice, of course, most directors do not take this opportunity, but edit their films along conventional lines, to produce more or less adequate additions to the entertainment industry. (Directors have often been prevented from editing their own films by the studios.) But the great directors have always ignored conventions, or adapted them to their own, original uses.

To illustrate his highly debatable point that

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a succession of photographic images can only be an objective *sign*, never a subjective *symbol*, Chiaromonte writes:

> All we have to do is to see a film twenty years old to realise how ephemeral the cinematic medium is. The movies, which at first glance seem to speak the most realistic and unequivocal language, quickly become stiff, mannered, and unreal.

It is true that most films date very quickly (though not much faster than second-rate painting and literature), but this applies only to conventional products, depending for their popularity on a formula, a topical plot, or a favourite star. As fashions in story-telling alter these naturally become quaint (and often increasingly attractive as a result). The elements that date them are the women's clothes, the received ideas of morality, the standards for glamour current at their period: they are *intended* as ephemera, and the passage of time gives them the academic interest of social history. But the good "art films" never date. *L'Atalante*, *L'Age D'Or*, *Ivan the Terrible* are stylised, self-conscious works of art, expressing in a pure form the genius of their creators, and they transcend the narrative limitations which Chiaromonte would like to impose on the cinema as a whole. It is hard to explain their survival, for the language of film criticism still lags behind its subject. One can compare Vigo's film to a lyrical poem, Eisenstein's to a Byzantine church, Buñuel's to an anarchist manifesto: but in doing so one is borrowing terms from other spheres of artistic activity and therefore confusing the issue. One is making the mistake of which Chiaromonte accuses Resnais, Antonioni, and Bergman—a mistake of which they are not all, and not always, guilty.

THE FACT THAT THESE THREE widely different directors should have been lumped together in his article shows that Chiaromonte is in some confusion about the cinema; he here makes an error typical of the philistine who assumes that the objects of his resentment must have other things in common beyond the fact that he cannot understand them. Many of his strictures do, in fact, apply to Resnais' *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*, an arty and pretentious work which has inspired the same kind of fashionable enthusiasm and meaningless debate as Rutland Boughton's *The Immortal Hour*, Barrie's *Mary Rose*, or some Victorian academic "problem picture." By deliberately withholding significance from the images they present on the screen and giving the audience *carte blanche* as regards interpretation, Resnais and Robbe-Grillet provide ammunition for the philistine argument that images arranged in an unconventional sequence *cannot* have significance. Ingmar Bergman, on the other hand, is an entirely conventional director, who makes fairly straightforward "literary" films, occasionally decorated by a baroque or Gothic-revival extravagance borrowed from the expressionist theatre. The only genuine innovator mentioned by Chiaromonte is Antonioni, whose films appear slow-moving to some people because he adjusts the balance of narrative technique to give internal and external development equal weight. He is possibly the most acute analyst of social behaviour and psychological tension that the cinema has ever known, but the indisputable accuracy of his social observation is ignored by his detractors, who are affronted by his subtle exploration of psychological conditions. "... An empty street," Chiaromonte complains,

> which is supposed to indicate (who knows how or why) the state of mind of a character—to say nothing of the ideas of the director—is simply a static image. It indicates nothing. The picture of an empty street can be superb as photography, but it is only the picture of an empty street.

Antonioni's films are full of empty streets, deserted cross-roads, blank walls, long passages: these belong to his narrative style and in the hands of imitators (as, for example, Patroni Griffi with *Il Mare*) are in danger of becoming clichés. But every artistic innovator creates new clichés. In an Antonioni film, emotional meaning is allowed to accrue round inanimate objects as it does in life. A place seen for the first time makes an impression that is unrecognisable later, when it has become familiar. The island in *L'Avventura* changes from a romantic pleasure-ground into a forbidding, desolate waste, because of what has happened on it—but the change is subjective, not physical. The least successful scene in *La Notte* is the climax, when the wife reads the husband's love-letter aloud and he fails to recognise it. Here, Antonioni is making words do what he has already done, as precisely if more suggestively, with images of emptiness.

CHIAROMONTE writes as if the "priests of the highbrow cinema" were a new phenomenon, mentioning only three comparatively young men. He says nothing of Eisenstein, Vigo, Renoir, Welles; and nothing of Truffaut and Godard who are making experiments with editing as daring as Antonioni's, and by deliberate allusions to the golden age of Hollywood incorporate and intellectualise (very French, this) some of the mindless glamour belonging to the commercial cinema at its most ephemeral. While the Italian's experiments give a superficial impression of ponderous slowness, those of

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the young French directors give an equally misleading impression of flippancy and speed. Why should we accept the arbitrary treatment of time adopted by the conventional cinema, and borrowed from conventional novels and plays? Films can approach nearer to the immediacy of human experience than any other medium. They can show that the passage of time is subjective; that a short walk to the bus-stop can seem to last an age, while the long bus journey can apparently pass in a second; that our apprehension of reality can be modified by memories (perhaps distorted) of the past and by vague prophecies of the future. Antonioni expands time; Godard contracts it; Resnais reorganises it; Agnès Varda, in *Cleo de 5 à 7*, scrupulously preserves it.

Chiaromonte acknowledges that

> The resources of the cinema are enormously rich. It has at its disposal a realm where all is explicit and accessible, where act immediately follows on intention, and where real life is magically transformed into a series of clear and definite events. But it is certainly not through the cinema that we can explore what Heraclitus called the "confines of the soul."

Why not? In a sense, all art clarifies: when the cinema is vague to no purpose, ambiguous for the sake of ambiguity, it is neither better nor worse than a pretentious poem or play. But to insist that the cinema must limit itself to the portrayal of "a series of clear and definite events" is to claim that painting should have remained representational, that the theatre should observe the classical unities, that verse should never be "free." It is confining the medium to the nickelodeon; halting its development at *The Great Train Robbery*, where it began; denying its unique and obvious opportunities for the effortless mingling of objective accuracy with subjective interpretation. It is because the cinema's technical resources for matching the surface of life are so rich, and have as yet been so little exploited, that a film director of genius to-day is in a stronger position than any other modern artist to penetrate beneath the surface and reach "what Heraclitus called 'the confines of the soul.'"

Pteranodon

A seven year old herd boy,
ragged happy and vacant,
sits alone playing the stonegame,
his back to the five
thin healthy head grazing.

Across the valley
the distant warts of huts
squat on the wrist of the hill.

Long believed extinct,
there was no one
but the walleyed
stampeding clot of cattle
to see the two dozen
feet of dusty leather
wingspread, hear the wet
crush of long toothed jaws closing,
the snap of vertebrae,
and nothing, nothing at all
the flight away
with the broken rabbit boy
one limb slow waving.

Douglas Livingstone

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NOTES & TOPICS

The End of the Affair

The "Spiegel" Case in Retrospect — By SEBASTIAN HAFFNER

DURING the last October week-end of 1962, when Khrushchev agreed to withdraw his rockets from Cuba and Indian resistance in the Himalayan foothills collapsed before the advancing Chinese, the Germans forgot all about the outside world and became more absorbed in their own politics than they had been for thirty years. For during the night of October 26th there had occurred that fantastic simultaneous police swoop on the offices of *Der Spiegel* in Hamburg and Bonn (and on a holidaying staff-writer and his wife in Spain) which was undoubtedly meant to put the most influential and controversial organ of the German press out of business. In this it did not succeed. Instead it changed the formerly placid German political landscape out of recognition. One is reminded of a rifle-shot in wintry mountains which misses its target but loosens an avalanche.

The *Spiegel* affair remained the all-absorbing topic in Germany up to the end of the year. It is hard to say whether it is really over now. It had some of the flavour (and some of the effects) of the Dreyfus affair in late 19th-century France. It split the country from top to bottom, shook and realigned the political forces, made and marred (especially marred) political reputations and careers, and drew all kinds of unexpected issues into its whirlpool.

In so doing, it became increasingly hard to follow. It would take a book to re-tell the whole intricate tale or bring light into the still numerous dark byways of "the affair." No such attempt will be made here. Instead, I shall try to draw a balance-sheet, to sum up what the affair has done to Germany. It is quite a lot.

1. IT HAS OVERTHROWN the late Defence Minister, Herr Franz Joseph Strauss, and put him for any foreseeable time out of the race for the succession of Dr. Adenauer.

This is quite an event. Little more than a year ago, Herr Strauss was clearly the coming man in Germany, and the only question seemed to be whether he would succeed Dr. Adenauer directly or after an interim period under Dr. Erhard. Although he had suffered some setbacks before in 1962, he remained up to the affair undoubtedly the strongest personal force among Germany's younger politicians. He rated top marks for energy, intelligence, vitality, ambition; his charm, too, could be formidable.

He was also the most controversial of them all. Admiration of his talents was matched by criticism of his character. His enemies painted him as an unscrupulous, ruthless, brutal power-lover. His defenders admitted faults of temperament but claimed for him a basic broad good nature and love of good life—which others again called self-indulgence and indiscretion.

For almost two years, Herr Rudolf Augstein, the editor of the weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel*, had waged a relentless personal campaign against Herr Strauss. Some of his charges became the subject of a Parliamentary investigation (which, on the whole, cleared Strauss). More impressive than the charges as such—which sometimes gave an impression of much ado about very little—was the sincere passion with which Augstein, himself originally rather a Strauss-fan, had come to believe that Strauss was a danger to his country, to be hounded out of public life at any price.

The irony is that Franz Josef Strauss has done more to discredit himself through what he did against *Der Spiegel* than *Der Spiegel* in what it was doing against him.

There is no reasonable doubt left that the action against *Der Spiegel*, with its basic police-State character and its unconstitutional features, was the personal handiwork of Herr Strauss. He knew and talked of it beforehand; he gave the order to keep the constitutionally responsible Minister of Justice uninformed of what was impending; and he was awake and alert during the night of October 26th when the action (ostensibly no business of his) took place; he personally caused, with several telephone calls

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at improbable hours during that night, the illegal arrest of one *Spiegel* writer and his wife in Spain, thereby incidentally usurping functions of the Foreign Minister as he had before usurped functions of the Minister of Justice.

Strauss's feelings about *Der Spiegel* are, of course, humanly understandable; he had certainly been long and cruelly provoked. Nevertheless his action was both wrong and ill-considered, a clumsy plot with something of a blind berserk touch about it. The thought that in the future Strauss might ever act in the same reckless way as a German Chancellor—perhaps in a matter of war and peace in the atomic age—is indeed appalling.

WORSE WAS TO FOLLOW. For several weeks Strauss tried, unskilfully and unsuccessfully, to deceive Parliament and public about his part in the action. He allowed his Permanent Under-Secretary to take the blame and the punishment for unconstitutional behaviour which had in fact been his own. Answering questioners in Parliament, the great man of power was reduced to the position of a fibbing schoolboy before being finally cornered and forced to make a partial confession of guilt. It was this which finally lost him his office—despite the remarkable electoral triumph he had scored, just at the hour of his worst humiliation, in his native Bavaria.

Strauss failed to go with dignity. He tried to pull Dr. Adenauer down with him by claiming —with what truth is not known—that he had acted throughout with the old Chancellor's full knowledge and approval, if not on his orders. He finally stamped out of his office with a fancy banquet and a grand tattoo, arranged by himself for himself.

He is certainly not only out of office but also (for any foreseeable time) out of the succession race; but he is by no means out of politics. He retains his hold on his Bavarian Christian Social Party, which has a key position in Parliament. A defection of this party could still at any time overthrow the Government and ruin the prospects of the Christian Democrats. In a word: the former Crown Prince of official Germany has become the biggest force for mischief.

2. WE ARE NOT QUITE DONE with Herr Strauss yet. Ostensibly, the action against *Der Spiegel* was not an act of revenge for *Der Spiegel*'s anti-Strauss campaign but part of an investigation of a suspected breach of official secrets of the Defence Ministry. The background to this is nothing else but the great NATO debate about the strategic doctrine for the defence of Europe, Germany, and Berlin, which has been going on since the Kennedy Administration decided for strengthening NATO's conventional forces in order to raise the atomic "threshold."

Strauss has been the most passionate European opponent of that decision. He believes that it amounts to a near-invitation to Moscow to use its conventional superiority for an attack. He thinks it is almost a crime against peace to "limit the risk" of such an attack and make it in any way "calculable" for the Soviets. He has been fighting a desperate dual campaign: *for* an extension of control over strategic nuclear weapons to all NATO States, including Germany; and *against* a raising of the German conventional forces above the 12-division level, which he regards as not only wasteful but positively harmful because of the implied weakening of nuclear deterrence.

His conviction and sincerity in all this is not to be doubted. It is, however, just this which has made him intolerant to the point of seeing almost a traitor in every dissenting subordinate; also, the feeling of fighting against overwhelming odds—little Germany against overpowering America—may have contributed to his insistence on an absolutely united doctrinal front in his own Ministry and General Staff.

He has had something less than complete success. There are quite a few German senior officers who, from their own reasoning and for their own reasons, back the new U.S. doctrine and strongly disagree with Strauss. Suppressed inside the Ministry and deeply worried about the possible consequences of Strauss's defence policy, some of them have sought and found contacts with and outlets in organs of the press, including *Der Spiegel*. In early October *Der Spiegel* had published a closely argued and well-documented article against the "Strauss doctrine," based especially on the distressing results of the "Fallex 62" exercise, which had found their way also into other German papers. This article—which was undoubtedly based on expert advice from inside the Defence Ministry and which other experts from that Ministry, representing the opposite school of thought, deemed "treasonable" in an opinion submitted to the office of the Federal Attorney—provided the pretext for the police swoop on the *Spiegel* offices as well as the object of legal investigation.

THE EFFECT OF IT ALL is that German public opinion, which before had cared surprisingly little about matters of high strategy, has now been thoroughly aroused, both about its right to be informed and consulted, and about the strategic issue itself. With Strauss out of office, the official German attitude in this vital issue has become wide open, because German expert opinion is divided and the suppression of this

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division has, for the moment at least, come to an end. The opinion of the new Defence Minister, Herr Kai-Uwe von Hassel, is unknown, perhaps even, as yet, to himself. Both military schools will clearly work their hardest on him.

An important influence will, however, still be exerted by Strauss, who has already announced that he will put up a public fight for his strategic convictions. He may thereby, ironically, come to do himself what he deemed "treasonable" when *Der Spiegel* did it, *viz.*, discuss high strategy in public, using inside knowledge for the purpose; but this will not detract from the force of his campaigning. Whatever the outcome, Germany has entered the first great public debate on strategy she has ever experienced, and this alone will make the next months an exciting and unpredictable time.

3. These months will also be the last of Dr. Konrad Adenauer. Next to Herr Strauss, Dr. Adenauer has been the chief loser in the *Spiegel* affair. His own role in the unconstitutional action of October 26th is not quite above suspicion (mainly owing to Strauss's allegations). He certainly showed a painful lack of judgment and self-control in the *Spiegel* debate in Parliament; and his authority, which had already suffered through the unacknowledged electoral defeat of September, 1961, took further blows during the crisis of his Government and coalition which began almost immediately after October 26th and drifted on without a guiding hand till mid-December.

Dr. Adenauer has always been oddly inept at Cabinet-making. The days (or rather weeks) of re-shaping his Government after elections have always—even in his best times—shown a hesitant, indecisive, sometimes almost helpless side of him. This time it was much worse; there were prolonged periods when the old Chancellor seemed utterly to have lost control.

The sad fact that the *Spiegel* crisis has brought home even to his most fervent adherents and admirers (and their ranks have thinned) is that Adenauer at 87 is paying his inevitable tribute to nature. He is no longer the man he was at 70, or at 80, or even at 85. That he himself is unaware of his deterioration makes no difference; it is usual with the very old. That he is still in office at all he now owes—terrible to say—to something that is not very easily distinguishable from pity. He has been upheld, not because he handled the *Spiegel* affair well, but because he handled it so poorly that his followers did not find it in their hearts to let this become his closing performance. "A man of his merits and his historic stature must not be allowed to fall over a matter like this and in a way like this"—this was the theme song of German Christian Democrats, heard in a hundred variations in this last winter; and it resulted in giving Dr. Adenauer another nine months in office against a firm promise that he would definitely retire after that time (*i.e.*, during the Parliamentary summer recess of 1963). It is probably the longest "lame-duck" period any head of government has ever been given anywhere; but there is no denying the fact that Dr. Adenauer is now a lame-duck Chancellor.

It is not an entirely happy result, for the intriguing and jockeying for position on succession day—which has almost immobilised German government for the last year—promises to become even worse. Dr. Adenauer still has no obvious successor. With the former favourite, Franz Josef Strauss, out of the race, and the two leading candidates, Dr. Erhard and Dr. Schröder, both less than fully convincing, dark horses may come forward. The new Christian Democratic party manager, Herr Dufhues, is sometimes mentioned nowadays. Von Hassel, the new Defence Minister, might enter the race, if he can establish himself in his office. And what about Paul Lücke, the plain but efficient and honest Minister of Housing, who nearly caused a political landslide in early December by plotting a "grand coalition" with Herbert Wehner of the Social Democrats? If the idea of the "grand coalition" revives after Adenauer (and this appears quite possible) Herr Lücke might turn out to become a sort of German Baldwin.

4. This is the fourth effect of the affair: that a grand coalition, up to now utopian, has suddenly become a much-discussed practical possibility; and this is only one of several indications that the political fronts in Germany have begun to dissolve.

The coalition of the Christian Democrats and the (more or less liberal) Free Democrats, which was formed with difficulty last autumn, had never worked happily; the *Spiegel* affair burst it wide open. The Free Democrats were outraged because of the general character of the action (they were liberals after all), because of its special object (Herr Augstein was close to the party and had once nearly become a Free Democratic M.P.), and because of the affront offered to themselves (it was their Minister of Justice who had been unconstitutionally bypassed). The Christian Democrats, for their part, made a direct attempt to murder their coalition partners. Their chief condition for a "grand coalition" with the Social Democrats was a change of the electoral system from the present modified P.R. to the British system, with the

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declared intention to disfranchise the three or four million liberal electors.

In spite of all this, the coalition has now been patched up through the sacrifice of Strauss, but this in turn has made his Bavarian Christian Social Party an uncertain partner. Both the Free Democrats and the Christian Social Bavarians are needed to give Dr. Adenauer a parliamentary majority. Both, however, are now distrustful of the Christian Democrats (as well as being hardly on speaking terms with each other).

This makes it understandable enough that important sections of the Christian Democrats should have sought—and still seek—a way out in a grand coalition with the Social Democrats. It is deeply significant that this was no longer opposed by Dr. Adenauer, to whom the idea had hitherto always been anathema—so weak has his position become—but by Dr. Erhard (and the "economic" wing of the party generally). It is one of the new features of the German political scene that the Erhard succession has now become entangled with the question of the grand coalition. It is "one thing or the other"—and a majority of Christian Democrats might prefer "the other."

It is not only the Christian Democrats who are torn apart over the question of the "grand coalition." The Social Democrats were and are also deeply divided; Herbert Wehner (who had partnered Paul Lücke in the tentative coalition talks) ended up with a nervous breakdown, so bitter and wounding had been the resistance of his fellow Socialists to his scheme. As things now stand, it cannot be taken for granted that either the CDU or the SPD would be able to form a grand coalition as intact parliamentary parties: either or both might pay for such an operation with a split.

ALTOGETHER, THE TREND TOWARDS a two-party system, which dominated the Adenauer era in Germany, has been reversed by the consequences of October 26th. There are now in the *Bundestag* not three parties as hitherto but actually four (the Christian Social Bavarians can no longer be regarded as a mere regional section of the Christian Democrats), and potentially six, because the Big Two have internally split into two groups one of which favours a grand coalition while the other abhors it.

Whether the present confusion and chaos will produce new workable alignments in the end, and on what lines, nobody can say. But certainly the political stability of Dr. Adenauer's Germany has proved a frail and deceptive thing. The party system has not set yet. Under really strong pressures it may yet be twisted out of all recognisable shape no less than the French party system has lately been. What can and must be said even now is that the first serious political disturbance in post-war Germany has upset not only coalitions and alliances but the political parties themselves.

5. I HAVE SO FAR DEALT WITH the personal, strategical, political, and, in passing, constitutional aspects and consequences of "the affair." But its most far-reaching effects may, in the end, appear in the legal field.

The action against *Der Spiegel*, although almost certainly initiated and engineered by Strauss from the Defence Ministry and actually executed by the police, would have been impossible without the active co-operation of the office of Federal Attorney (which took formal responsibility for it) and, to some extent, of the law courts preliminarily upholding the arrests, searches, confiscations, and other controversial measures. It has therefore inevitably rattled the worst skeleton in the German cupboard: the unpurged and unreconstructed system of justice —the only thing in Germany that survives completely intact as Hitler left it.

Even before Hitler, under Weimar, the *"Vertrauenskrise der Justiz"*—crisis of confidence in justice—was one of the most disturbing topics in Germany. It was caused by the political prejudice habitually shown by German courts during the period. Then came Hitler, and under him horrendous things happened in German courts which do not bear contemplating. And yet it is just the German courts (and the legal authorities in general), whose record under Hitler was worse than that of any other profession—far worse, I think, than that of the military—which alone of all German institutions escaped every attempt of "de-nazification" or "reconstruction" after 1945. The "sacredness" of the judge's office saved them all. Continuity in this field has been total.

Oddly enough, the result so far was or appeared to be less bad than might have been feared. There were no major scandals of justice as there had been almost uninterruptedly in Weimar times. There was no new crisis of confidence—up to now. There even were stirrings of an unwontedly real judicial independence *vis-à-vis* State authority and Government in the newly-created and carefully staffed Constitutional Court. True, German justice was plagued by periodic revelations from East Berlin (where old files were being studied) about the Nazi record of active judges or State attorneys; some of them were very damaging. But however bad the past, the present did not seem to give much cause for complaint—until now.

The role of the organs of justice in the *Spiegel* affair has suddenly opened deep old wounds again. The legal authorities involved have failed

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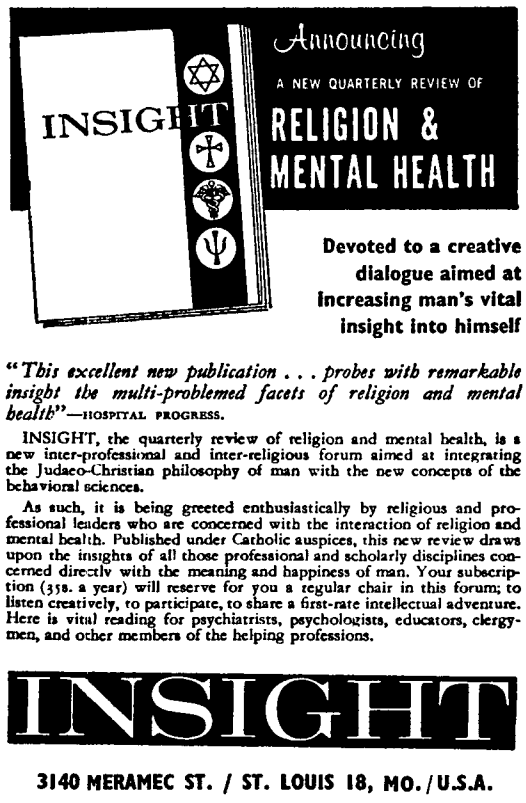
to explain satisfactorily to the public why, in order to investigate the possibly treasonable character of a published article, it was necessary to invade a newspaper office at night, to keep it occupied for a month, and to seize files which had nothing to do with the incriminated article. They have given the impression of using "investigation" as a pretext for trying to close down an important organ of political opposition. They have also given the impression of arresting people first and searching for something to accuse them of afterwards. They have in their occasional public statements shown a curious obtuseness about the difference between journalists and spies; and they have done nothing to protect the men whom they were investigating from being libelled up and down the country as "common traitors" when no charge had yet been brought and when it was still an entirely open question as to whether a charge would ever be brought. (There has not been one to this day.)

How incompatible is all this with the existing state of the German penal code? The law of treason (especially in the interpretation which the old *Reichsgericht* has given it and which has never been modified) makes it possible to convict any journalist who publishes anything but official hand-outs. German procedure gives shockingly wide opportunities for detention without trial, and allows crippling restrictions on legal defence (the arrested *Spiegel* editors were not allowed to talk to their defence counsel except in the presence of a representative of the prosecution or a judge for weeks on end). All of this has suddenly been brought home to the German public through the *Spiegel* affair. The public has been reminded with a shock that the German penal system is still deeply authoritarian in spirit, rooted as it is in the most reactionary period of mid-19th-century Prussia (when the overriding object of legal policy had been the suppression of the democratic tendencies revealed in the revolution of 1848). The Prussian penal system of the 1850s had been taken over with hardly any alteration by the German *Reich* after 1871, and then by the Federal Republic after 1949.

And this system is still, after all, handled very largely by the same men as under Weimar (when the crisis of confidence in German justice arose) and under Hitler. The office of the Federal Attorney, which stands in the centre of the *Spiegel* affair, had as its last head, in 1962, a man who had to resign hurriedly a few weeks after his appointment—when East Berlin produced incontestable documentary proof that he had participated in some of the worst judicial murders of the Hitler period. Since then no new Federal Attorney has been found. How could the people help but wonder about German law and justice? They have been asking themselves whether this is not the sphere where authoritarian and anti-democratic traditions are still most virulent in German public life; whether something like a legal currency reform, a scrapping of the whole system with its whole cast and a reconstruction from scratch on a new basis, may not be necessary if Germany is really to become safe for democracy.

6. Whether Germany is really safe for democracy yet; and if not, how she can be made to be: that is the deepest and widest issue the *Spiegel* affair has brought to the fore. The fact that it has suddenly become an issue in public debate is the greatest change the affair has wrought in Germany. In a far deeper sense than the question of Adenauer's personal political position, the affair has ended the Adenauer era, even if Adenauer remains in office for another six or nine months.

The Adenauer era in Germany has been an era of studiously unresolved contradictions and carefully maintained ambiguities. In foreign affairs, Dr. Adenauer has cultivated a masterly ambiguity between a *Rheinbund* policy, which would leave Germany divided by saving the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present Federal Republic from the wreck of the *Reich* and accommodating it to a Western context—and a policy of strength and anti-Bolshevism, which promised even the East Prussians the ultimate recovery of their homeland from the "mortal enemy." In home affairs, constitutional liberalism (and a not negligible amount of real democracy) has been most astonishingly combined with the almost complete avoidance of any harsh break with an authoritarian past and tradition. A stable democracy run as often as not by ex-Nazis, satin-smooth, impeccable, a remarkable achievement in its way, but somehow a little too good to be true: that was Adenauer's Germany, and it ended with a bang on October 26th, 1962.

On that day—or in that night, rather—an authoritarian shadow state was suddenly seen to be in a kind of secret existence in Germany and capable of going into action as if no liberal constitution existed. For a moment some observers, numb with incomprehension, felt as if they were dreaming and this was 1933 again. But only for a moment. Then there was a groan and a groundswell of public anger, and things began to happen. The secret authoritarian and the public democratic Germany, which had for thirteen years peacefully co-existed under Dr. Adenauer's inscrutable paternal direction, suddenly separated, declared themselves, and confronted each other. And the democrats, somewhat to their own surprise, found (in the first engagements at any rate) that they got rather the better of their opponents. The politicians involved in the *Spiegel* action fared badly. Only the legal bastion of authoritarianism still stands defiantly.

Is THE "AFFAIR" OVER? For months, nobody in Germany has talked of anything else. Now, suddenly, nobody seems to be talking about it at all. But I doubt whether this is the end of it. Too many things which seemed stable in Germany have become fluid through the *Spiegel* affair, too many fixed positions have been shaken, too many taboos broken. Above all, the fundamental secular issue of German politics, the issue of Democracy versus Authoritarianism —an issue which Bismarck, Weimar, and Hitler all seemed to have settled in favour of one or the other, only to prove in the end that their solution did not work; and which Adenauer had kept in masterful suspense for thirteen years—has been re-opened and cannot now be closed again. The 1960s promise to become as harsh and lively a time in German affairs as the 'fifties were soft and somnolent.

To a Pomegranate Tree

Get away from here, get away.
Go visit other eyes.
I wrote about you yesterday.

Green, I said
To your branches bowing in the wind
And red red red
To the still drops of your fruit
And I brought your root to light,
Your moist, dark, stubborn root.

So now you don't exist.
Now you block off the day
And the yet unrisen moon.

Come, my love, and see
(I wrote about you day before yesterday
And your young memory
Afflicts my hands like a nettle).
Have a look at this odd tree:
His blood's in my eyes, on my hands, on my head.
And he still stands where he stood.

T. Carmi
(translated by Dom Moraes)

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"Going into Europe"

WITH *this last series of comments (all written before the New Year) we conclude—although it may appear that General de Gaulle has concluded it for us—our inquiry into British attitudes on the European question. The results of our tabulation give a rough result of 5 in favour of entry into the Common Market for every 1 against, with 1 indifferent, undecided, or impatient for the exact terms (if any). More precisely:*

FOR (*including 7 tentatively "for, on balance . . ."*): *77.* AGAINST: *17.*
INDIFFERENT, UNDECIDED (*etc.*): *16.*

For whatever interest it may have for students of so-called insularity, the views of "our intellectuals" (from Auden, Amis, and Ayer to Worsthorne, Wilson, and Ward) are on record: May they not prove to be on behalf of yet another "lost cause"!

Symposium (IV)

Raymond Williams:

WHEN THE SUMMER ARGUING about the Common Market was at its muddiest, I was camping in Provence and seeing only the French papers. Of course I read what "the English" were thinking, and I was glad that on a technicality, having been born across the Welsh border, I needn't feel bound by it. Then I looked away through the pines at the other tents in view, nationally identifiable only by the car signs. During the weeks we were there, we saw French, German, Austrian, Italian, Swiss, Belgian, Dutch, Swedish, British. I asked myself if I was one of the "Europeans" who had been identified as a party. That I was in fact European I did not doubt. I feel myself European in ways that make sense of the complex British experience. When I oppose contemporary middle-class English assumptions in social and literary thinking (and that I have been guilty of this I have been made well aware, in your own pages), I base myself partly on Welsh experience, where I still find immediate contact, and partly on elements of the European tradition, in which I have always felt more at home. I know that I would feel utterly isolated and hopeless in England, if I had only contemporary middle-class Englishness to measure myself by. But then that is the complexity, because the "Europeans," as a party, seem to me of that essence. They talk of the Common Market in terms of internationalism, and become old-Statesmanish lyrical about wine and sun and pavement tables. These, as adventures, don't even begin in my own mind, for they are already, except for the lyricism, taken for granted. I mean that I can't feel, meeting Western Europeans, that there is any *international* problem at all. There are interesting differences, between and within national groups, but no more than I find with Scots or Yorkshiremen. A basic community and culture and habit is effectively there, at the level of ordinary living. When there are conflicts of loyalty and ideas, I find myself lining up across the national groups: against Home and Adenauer and with Sartre and Dolci. The only *international* challenge I know is with Africans and Indians and Latin-Americans. When anyone talks of getting beyond limited frontiers and local habits, it is to those continents that I look.

I react against "European" as an adventure and a gimmick. The problem is how we, as Europeans, are going to behave to each other and to the rest of the world. I shall judge the Common Market terms from that basic standpoint; at the moment they look unacceptable, internationally, quite apart from the fact that even Europeans will be excluded from the arrangements: the Austrians, Swiss, and Swedes, from that camp in Provence, to say nothing of the Hungarians and Poles and Yugoslavs. This doesn't mean I can line up with, for example, Mr. Gaitskell or the Forward Britain Movement. All that is gone anyway, and if it's only a thousand years of history I resent being excluded from it: we were here before that, and Europeans have been arriving ever since.

It's too complicated and detailed to go through, in the sort of comment you asked for. But briefly, I want to see the Common Market judged by European standards. If it divides even Europe, not accidentally but as a matter of policy, I am against it. If it disgraces Europe, by breaking our complex and delicate links with the non-European peoples to whom we are in living debt, I am against it. If it is a tired, painted cartel, seeking to substitute efficient consumption for the democratic and socialist traditions which are Europe's major contributions to humanity, I am against it. But I am only against as a European, and I recognise the European responsibility to put our house in order, to co-operate with each other and with the rest of the world. It will be a bloody tragedy if we betray Europe by being pseudo-Europeans, or by being so "English" that we find ourselves in the wrong century facing the wrong problems. Still, to have two parties, locked in amplified combat and both wrong, is what we've had to get used to for years. It's time for a change, don't you think?

Paul Johnson:

I WOULD OPPOSE ENTRY on the terms we are likely to get at the present. Mr. Macmillan, it seems to me, is seeking entry at the worst possible moment, when the U.K. economy is still stagnant, when the Six are still in a period of relative expansion, and when the two men who are least favourably

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disposed to our entry—Adenauer and de Gaulle—are still in a position to dictate the terms. In two or three years' time, we shall be much more competitive *vis-à-vis* Europe, de Gaulle will be out (he is already slipping), and Adenauer dead or retired. We might then go in, in conjunction with the other EFTA powers (who are to be abandoned under the current negotiations), on radically different terms.

But "radically different terms" should, in my view, involve a re-shaping of the economic concept of the Market. I doubt if a high-tariff consortium of advanced industrial nations is a practical proposition in the world we live in. It would make it far more difficult for the poor countries to establish manufacturing industries and at the same time weigh the terms of trade still more heavily against commodities, on which their survival depends. The Europeans, echoed by Mr. Macmillan, argue that the Market, by raising living standards here, would allow us to increase our exports of capital and economic aid. But experience shows that aid is no substitute for stability in commodity prices. In the 'fifties, the switch in the terms of trade lost the Latin Americans fourteen times as much as they received in U.S. aid and loans: the political consequence of this arithmetic was Castroism. In the long run, European prosperity depends on the rise of mass-consumer markets in the underdeveloped areas. This will require the creation of a world price structure for commodities and a fundamental increase in world liquidity—what might be termed the application of Keynesian principles of credit (already accepted on a national basis) to the international supply of money. Mr. Maudling's experimental proposals in this direction, made at the last meeting of the IMF, were far more important and revolutionary than the allegedly progressive Common Market. They were promptly rejected by the French and German finance ministers. Nevertheless, they will, I believe, be pushed through in some form during the next decade, so that in retrospect the frenzied Common Market debate will seem as irrelevant and sterile as the famous tariff controversies of 1905 and 1923.

Now the political side. I have no objection in principle to pooling sovereignty. But I would hesitate to do so in the company of powers, especially France and Germany, whose traditions of parliamentary democracy are so fragile. I would much prefer to see us drawing closer to the United States, which shares with us common constitutional roots, and whose attitude to public probity, democratic processes, and the rule of law is very close to our own.

Hugh Seton-Watson:

THE PROBLEM IS FAR LESS economic than political and cultural. Britain has belonged to European culture for much more than "a thousand years." During the centuries when world history was European history, the cultural unity of Europe was counter-balanced by the deep political divisions between the most powerful European states. To-day these divisions are insignificant in comparison with the great divisions in world politics, and the largest European states are dwarfed by the Giant Powers. But the cultural unity of Europe remains.

The densely populated British Isles cannot be a Sweden. Britain is no longer the centre of a world empire, and the Commonwealth is no more than a social club, whose members are often not even polite to each other. Britain must find a place in a greater community, and the only possible community is Europe. For myself, I have been a European since my childhood. Europe is my home because Scotland and Britain are my country. A new European patriotism gives the best hope for young people in Britain. In Europe, together with other Europeans, they can play a part as great as that of any generation of their ancestors.

Of course Europe is more than "the Six." Of course our Polish, Hungarian, Roumanian, and other kinsmen must one day join us. Of course there must be no arbitrary rejection of the overseas nations whose origin is in Europe (the nations of Quebec and Brazil no less than those of the United States or New Zealand). Of course there must be no hostility to Asia or Africa, even if, far more frequently than the *bien pensants* of our "Left" will admit, Asians and Africans hate Europe, not for what it has done to them, but just because it exists. They have every right to preach, and if they can, to practise, Asian solidarity or Pan-Africanism: Europeans too have the right to unite.

Clearly some features of the "Common Market" must arouse misgivings. I have my reservations about some of the policies of de Gaulle, and about the personality and the policies of Adenauer. But this is the only Europe which we have the opportunity to join and to mould. Those who wait for some Europe of perfect social-democratic virtue of a distant future, while the backwoodsmen of "Left" and "Right" in Britain join with the parochial fanatics among the "Six" in a massive operation of political sabotage, will share the blame for a tragedy which will harm Britain as much as it will harm Europe.

John Lehmann:

I AM NO ECONOMIST, but (1) owing to various positions of trust which I hold, I have to try and keep myself abreast of economic developments and economic thought. I am a convinced expansionist.

(2) I have been very much impressed by the economic growth of the Six since they formed their union; and though their growth may be slowing down now, I fear that our exports—by which we live—will find it very tough going if we are finally left out.

(3) I do not see that either the Commonwealth or EFTA can ever provide a counterbalancing economic alternative; though I agree that we must do our best (particularly in the case of New Zealand) to safeguard their interests in the final treaty. As for the USA, it is clear that she intends to base her

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whole economic strategy (which is the more-than-economic strategy of the whole non-Communist world) on our joining, and it will be to our disadvantage in our vital trade relations with her at least if we are left out.

(4) It is also clear that the Government's move is based on strategic, diplomatic, and political arguments as much as on economic arguments. I have been impressed by the P.M.'s insistence on the danger of a decline in our diplomatic influence in world counsels if we are left out. The fact that the political situation in both Germany and France can be considered to be abnormal, and therefore unstable, at the moment seems to me rather a reason for joining than not.

(5) I think a lot of poppycock is talked about the "threat to Parliament" and the "threat to the Monarchy" if we join. I have not found that the Dutch, for instance, consider either of these institutions basically threatened in their country. A surrender of certain areas of sovereignty has already, inevitably in this age of larger groupings and giant dangers, taken place for European nations both inside and outside the Six.

(6) I have always been an European in cultural matters; and I believe that we are constantly in danger in this country of lapsing into a rather complacent parochialism when we turn away from the main currents of thought and artistic creation on the Continent. We are Europeans; and it seems to me likely that closer association with the rest of Europe will have a stimulating effect on us intellectually and artistically.

David Marquand:

PERHAPS BECAUSE I'M PARTLY Welsh, partly Scottish, and partly Channel Islander, my instinctive sympathies lie not with the great metropolitan nations of the continent, but with the small, stubborn, unassimilated peoples who refuse to conform to the patterns of their more powerful neighbours: with the Jews who refuse to be Gentile, the Catalans who refuse to be Spanish, the Poles who refuse to be German or Russian, the Irish who refuse to be English—and the English who have refused for 500 years to be European. Like Orwell, I rejoice in the *differentness* of England; and detest the inverted Blimps who believe that continental ways must be smarter, more up to date, or more "dynamic" than English ways. Finally, and no doubt inconsistently, I am passionately pro-American. I like Americans far better than Europeans, I feel far more at home in American than I do in Europe. Half the authors who have influenced me most are American; next to London, my favourite cities are San Francisco and Boston; next to the British Labour movement, the political tradition I feel closest to is the grass-roots radicalism of the Jefferson-Jackson-Roosevelt myth.

If my emotional references were all that had to be taken into account, I should like this country to follow a "little England" policy of stubborn isolationism; and if that failed I should like it to become the 51st state of the United States. But, of course, neither of these is possible. Isolation is out, since we no longer have the strength to make others respect it; and the 51st state is out since the other 50 don't want us.

As always happens in the real world, we face a choice between second-bests: on one side, membership not of some ideal "Europe," but of a distinctly un-ideal Common Market; on the other, a gradual loss of world influence. The only rational way of choosing between them is to balance the price we shall have to pay for joining against the loss of influence we shall certainly suffer if we stay out. In practice, this means subjecting the actual terms of our entry to microscopic examination—since it's by those terms that the price of our entry will be determined. Every quarter per cent on every petty tariff on every obscure commodity must be scrutinised as though it were the final feather in the scales, determining our whole destiny. For in fact the mass of such pretty details *will* determine our whole destiny; and a pound of feathers weighs as much as a pound of lead.

It's not clear, yet, where the balance of advantage lies. For me there are two crucial factors: the immediate effect of our entry on India and Pakistan, and the fate of the neutral members of EFTA. For us to damage the Indian or Pakistani economies in order to grow richer ourselves would be an act of criminal selfishness. For us to join the EEC without making sure that the Swedes get associate status on reasonable terms would be an act of the grossest treachery. So far, no one can possibly tell how these two issues will be decided. Until the answers are clear, my attitude is a reluctant Europeanism in principle, combined with wary agnosticism about the actual terms available.

Mark Bonham Carter:

THE ARGUMENTS for and against Britain joining Europe—as though she was not part of Europe anyway—become more and more technical. Since the full terms are not yet negotiated and the consequences of joining, whatever these terms, lie in the future, neither side can win an outright victory. It is, therefore, impossible to supply the *proof* which Mr. Gaitskell demanded before making up his mind. But behind this technical controversy lies a difference of attitude between the two sides which tends to get lost in the intricacies of the debate.

There are of course terms which even the most passionate pro-marketeer would reject, which is saying no more than that if the Six do not wish Britain to join they can prevent her. But I very much doubt if there are any terms sufficiently generous to persuade the anti-marketeers to link this country's fortunes with the European Community. When it comes down to it, they demand the re-writing of the Treaty of Rome and the elimination of its political implications. This, as

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they know very well, is impossible and it is here that the difference of attitude sticks out like an outcrop of granite in the somewhat placid landscape of British politics.

"Toute ma vie," wrote General de Gaulle in the first untranslatable sentence of *L'Appel, "je me suis fait une certaine idée de la France."* In the same way, though it cannot be put into English, we all have *"une certaine idée de l'Angleterre."* Mine is that of an England whose achievement is not confined to a brief and adventitious period of supremacy in the nineteenth century. It is of a country whose power has always depended directly on the European situation and whose intellectual influence, stimulated by continental ideas, has in its turn contributed to a European culture which, whether liberal or communist, is in the process of becoming a world culture. The contending ideologies of to-day are European (anglo-continental) and it can be argued that ideologically the rest of the world is still in a colonial status.

In the world of power politics this country's policy has always been determined by its position within Europe. Our Empire and Commonwealth was collected in this context. But as the functions and responsibilities of the state have changed and the military and economic power of Europe declined in relation to the rest of the world, so the coincidence of its interests has become closer; and since we cannot escape the consequences of what our European neighbours do, it is vital that we exert the maximum influence over their actions. When Chatham said that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire he was formulating a rather sophisticated theorem for the guidance of future British foreign secretaries. To-day it expresses a truth so obvious that it can only be denied by those whose love of isolation is so strong that it totally obscures their knowledge that it is impossible.

Marcus Cunliffe:

I AM NOT ENTIRELY sold on the *Wirtschaftswunder* or the rest of the New Europe. In general I trust Socialist reactions more than Conservative ones. But in this case I am confused by the apparent reversal of party roles. I suppose their disagreement might easily have been polarised the other way round, with the Opposition opposing the opposers. I see the force of Mr. Gaitskell's contention that to-day's apparent progress may be to-morrow's regress—in creating a larger political entity that might lead to larger bedevilments in world affairs. But that kind of reasoning could prevent us from ever doing anything new. Indeed more and more of our national ingenuity seems devoted to forms of exquisite hesitation: excuses, recriminations, jeremiads, face-savings, programmes for having no programme. I sense the paralytic symptoms in myself: *e.g.*, in prose-style, a superfluity of sentences balanced between *on the one hand* and *on the other hand*. As a possible cure I prescribe joining the Common Market. In the words of the song, I want to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative, not mix with Mister-in-Between.

George Weidenfeld:

IN THE FIELD of book publishing Britain stands to gain considerably by entering the Common Market. For although there is an open licence on books and the whole trend of "co-productions" of art books, encyclopædias, and other illustrated volumes, is a very marked one, the formalisation of Britain's adherence to the Common Market of literature and printing will accelerate and precipitate this trend with great economic and cultural advantages

In my view, Britain can become the great "converting" centre, *i.e.*, the place where European scholarship, imagination, taste, and thought can be translated into an idiom that the wider English-language markets in the United States, and also in Asia and Africa will more readily understand and accept.

For the British public itself, a growing contact with European literature on all levels, specialised education, self-improvement, entertainment, etc., will mean that many retrograde tendencies to philistinism and parochialism, still strong in the book trade, will yield to a more outward looking and internationally minded way of thinking.

Brian Crozier:

IF BRITAIN JOINS the Common Market, food prices will rise, and many small, or merely inefficient, businesses will collapse. In time, the influx of foreign workers will cause a good deal of labour unrest, which will express itself in a wave of strikes.

This may sound like the opening you would expect from an anti-marketeer, but it is not. I have been a "European" for many years. I wish we had been at Messina and I wish we had signed the Treaty of Rome right at the start. I wish we had never launched the Free Trade Area, and when it collapsed as could be foreseen more than a year before the event—I wish we hadn't compounded our error by launching the little free trade area. I wish our rulers had thought as they now seem to be thinking several years earlier and that they had taken the trouble to prepare public opinion for our entry into Europe several years ago. We are now much more badly placed to get acceptable terms from the Six than we need have been; and the longer we wait, the worse the terms will become.

But we must still go in (if the French will let us). The little inconveniences I mentioned at the beginning are a small price to pay for some of the things that ought to follow, and I'm not thinking simply of the commercial advantages, though these will be very great. May I leave it to

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more competent people to describe them? The political advanages, in "cosmic' terms, are overwhelming. With Britain in, the Common Market will rival the United States as a giant producer of wealth. The free world will thus have not one but two economic giants, each capable of outproducing the Soviet Union, and probably the Soviet empire as a whole. If a sane policy of assistance to the less developed areas is applied, the cold war is as good as won, for two reasons: the free world will have a far larger disposable surplus than the Communist world; and the underdeveloped world will have been shown which of the two systems is the more effective. No wonder Mr. Khrushchev is worried.

Bernard Levin:

THE FIRST THING that strikes me on looking at the Common Market controversy is irrelevant, though interesting. In the 1936 American Presidential election, Alexander Woolcott said that he was voting Democrat because "although there are some good men for Roosevelt, and some good men for Landon, all the heels are for Landon." There is a curious echo of this situation to-day, as I see it, for although there are men I respect on both sides of the argument, all the people in British public life whom I most despise (such as Mr. Harold Wilson, Mr. A. J. P. Taylor, and Dr. Joan Robinson, to name but three) are for staying out.

This is not, however, in itself an argument for going in. The second point I take is that the question of whether we go in or not is no longer open: we are obviously committed to doing so, and will do so whatever the terms. (Here a subpoint is worth considering: it seems to me that there can be no doubt in the mind of anyone, whether for or against, who even tries to be objective, that the Government has hornswoggled the Tory Party into supporting Britain's entry with arguments more palpably dishonest than any deployed in British politics since Suez; the impression has deliberately been created that the terms will, or may, be better than the Government knows, as a matter of certain fact, they possibly can be.) All we can now say is whether the prospect makes us happy or unhappy, and why.

It makes me happy. The economic arguments are to me secondary, or, to put it another way, the economic disadvantages of staying out seem to me greater than the advantages of going in. (Nobody but a fool will take the slightest notice of any of the prognostications, bright or gloomy, currently being made by the economists, who have never been right on any single issue in the past—remember all those confident statements about our entire reserves of coal being used up by 1965?—and show no signs of starting to be right now.) But, as an advance towards a true European partnership including Britain, the Common Market strikes me as the most exciting, fruitful and admirable prospect on the British political horizon since the Labour Government's (largely unconscious) decision to start dismantling the Empire. This is not a hankering for Federal Union (whatever became of Clarence K. Streit?) or any other such dusty scheme. It is, first, a recognition that Britain's changed situation demands a changed approach to international affairs (and considering that Britain's situation changed permanently a little over 20 years ago —it can be dated precisely at December 7th, 1941, when the United States entered the war—nobody can maintain that our re-thinking has been hurried). As part of a European federation, which I take it will become increasingly close over the years, Britain can have an influence and an effect strikingly different from, but perhaps scarcely less great than, the influence she wielded when Britannia ruled the waves. How *little* the little-Englanders look against that prospect!

But the wider vision is a greater one, and to me the most important of all. I have always instinctively thought of Britain, despite the evidence to the contrary, as an essentially European nation; similarly, I have always thought of Western Europe as an entity. "Europe a nation" is premature: but Europe a unified group, each of its parts contributing richly to, and drawing richly from, the whole, is already, thanks to the great concept of the European Economic Community, on the way to becoming reality. As the old nationalisms wither (and I believe they will) and the idea of a community takes hold, Europe can project, to the world in general and across the Iron Curtain in particular, a picture of prosperity, peace, and creative harmony that she has never, in all her history, achieved before. Shall we succeed where the Romans failed? Put it this way: shall Britain not try to see we do?

Robert Conquest:

I STRONGLY FAVOUR ENTRY. There is a lot to be said against capitalism, as against all economic systems yet devised (except possibly 1937 Catalonia). The profit motive and the power motive, the entrepreneur and the bureaucrat, are equally repellent. But we know that the excesses of capitalism can be controlled and its powers harnessed. What is so frightful about *British* capitalism, and British socialism too, is its gluey inefficiency. These smug bowlerhattees are not making the country the one amend in their power for the annoyance they cause. The Common Market seems the only means available for making them put up or shut up. I'd hope, too, that other smugness would crumble *pari passu* with the economic. My only reservation is that not enough thought seems to be given at the moment to the economically minor, but socially major, necessity of buffering the very old and the very poor against the shock of economic change.

Politically, I can't see the impending "unity" amounting to much more than (at most) the equivalent of the original Articles of Confederation in America, before the Federal Union (except to the wholly necessary and beneficent extent of provid-

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ing joint political authority over the technical agencies). The idea, whatever the formal position, that we would ever permit a Parliament in Brussels to impose Catholic sex laws or Communist press laws on us seems the merest chimera. As for those who oppose closer political ties because they do not like Adenauer or de Gaulle, one can only say that this sort of short-range calculation has always proved historically irrelevant. Both Socialists and anti-Socialists in the 'twenties thought of Bourgeois Prague intruding between Red Vienna and Red Berlin. Ten years later....

As for culture, I don't adjust my reading of foreign literatures to the requirements of political or economic authorities in any case.

Nicholas Kaldor:

FROM THE ECONOMIC point of view the case against joining the Common Market seems to me overwhelming, and contrary to what some people think, its long-run consequences are likely to be even worse than the immediate effects. In the short-run we shall have to face the problem of adjustment due to having to pay more for our food, and hence a critical situation in our balance of payments. In the long-run economic integration with the Continent might well mean that we shall become a depressed area from which mass emigration offers the only escape. As the oldest and least dynamic industrial region we are likely to suffer from the same handicaps as Scotland and the North of England have suffered (in relation to the rest of the United Kingdom) ever since the First World War. We shall be deprived of any economic instrument (other than deflation) for regulating our level of employment and prosperity and may become increasingly dependent on the EEC's Social Fund for mitigating local unemployment.

The political argument is that our joining will make Continental Western Europe more democratic, more peaceful, and more outward-looking, but it is a mirage to think that if we are economically weak our political influence can be very strong.

It is also wrong to believe that our influence in the world is bound to diminish if we stay out. On the contrary, if we do not give up our independence in economic, monetary, and financial matters we could raise our economic strength considerably by a vigorous policy of comprehensive economic planning. Contrary to prevailing opinion I believe that the Commonwealth, as an association, is gaining added strength through the accession of the many newly emergent countries of Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, whose interest in maintaining world peace and in the adoption of conciliatory, non-ideological courses is much the same as ours. Together with the Scandinavian and the European neutrals we could exert far more influence in steering the course of world events than if we became closely tied to a group of continental powers whose policies are bound to be governed by the strength of German irredentism and by the highly conservative 19th-century outlook of the proprietary classes of the states of Continental Europe.

Furthermore, by staying out of Europe and sticking to the Commonwealth we would be far more influential in guiding the political and social temper of the underdeveloped world than if we were aligned to a group of powers which—rightly or wrongly—is tainted with "neo-colonialism" and whose attitude towards the newly emergent countries arouses deep suspicion. Taking a long view this perhaps is the most important consideration.

Sir Robert Hall:

TO ME, the political case for going into Europe is more important than the economic one. For those who believe in the value of the individual, and who are prepared to do something about it, the best prospect is to move towards as close an association as we can with more or less like-minded countries. After we have entered (if we succeed), I hope that the next step will be a closer association of the Atlantic countries, open to others who think as we do. If we don't hang together—

The economic arguments are less important, but here I think that our main danger is that we will take advantage of our own prosperity to put too much stress on security and not enough on progress. The Common Market will help to strengthen the dynamic tendencies in our society. We *could* do this in other ways, but I see little sign that we will.

Colin MacInnes:

TWO TRENDS, in Western, Marxist, and "uncommitted" groups: violent growth of dated surface nationalisms accompanies latent undramatic spread of international organisms—industrial, commercial, cultural, even military.

If this international tendency is alternative to atomic suicide, then Common Market seems progressive. But in fact it comes too late and already constitutes a political super-nationalism (cf., *Festung Europa* of unhappy memory). Would have been splendid at time of Versailles treaty, but now, while seeming expansive, is restrictively archaic—*dépassé par les événemenents*, as they might say in Joyous Entry Street.

Entry of Britain would create here climate hostile to democracy, socialism, toleration, favourable to clericalism, militarism, white supremacy. (Connection of pro-Market propaganda with tentative fascist upsurge in England should not be missed.)

Is not even European: smaller nations and neutrals to be excluded, also East European countries without which "Europe" is a truncated cripple. Since remnants of Commonwealth are now nothing but trade, entry would leave us only, as Commonwealth reality, with H.M. The Queen.

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But no good keeping out unless we move dynamically, with six super-Heaths (Labour men?—well, let's hope so), in direction of international common market (no Caps for this one). Otherwise, escape from frying-pan into damped-down fire.

Chief embarrassment of being anti-Market is your allies: Messrs. Khrushchev, Beaverbrook, Hope-and-Glory Tories, Taylor, and Pickles—and even, it would now seem, de Gaulle and Adenauer. But we must rise above this amiable enmity.

England *is* European—yes, of course—yet never has been: it is hybrid-international or nothing. Choice is to be more hybrid, more international, or political-cultural elimination inside this Carolorin-gian *Festung*.

Charles Fenby:

IT IS NOTICEABLE that the anti-market force is particularly strong in the sort of people who never cease from mental strife to intensify the chauvinism with which this country has been afflicted since the war. Whether these people are moved by the good old jingo motives, sheer prejudice, or a belief that they are called upon to grasp the "moral leadership of the world," it is not at all difficult to imagine what is in store for us if they have their way: a new effort to get us still further detached from Western Europe (and America, of course) which would inevitably mean new degrees of xenophobia and fantasy building.

It may be too much to assume that the result would be full-blooded (if that is the word) neutralism, but it could hardly fail to increase our insularity, and imagination boogles at the lengths to which this could go. Earl Attlee has just told us ("Are we barring the right people from Britain?" in *Sunday Express*, November 4th) that, so long as we keep a wary eye on foreigners who might try to settle in Britain, and are careful not to succumb ourselves to a "vague Europeanism", then we may "by all means" visit foreign countries.

One sometimes wonders whether even this dazzling degree of tolerance would last.

William Clark:

THE MAIN QUESTION to be answered about the European Common Market is "Is it relevant to the issues of our time?" The two main issues are: the nuclear balance and the gap between Rich Nations and Poor.

My interest is in the latter and my final attitude to the Common Market will depend on whether the negotiations and the terms have shown that the object of the institution is not just to make the rich richer, but to spread wealth more widely and more equitably. Since trade is the main means whereby the poorer countries get the money for development, the Common Market is properly concerned with this issue.

At present there are two points which make me doubtful about the EEC. First, its refusal to promote trade in manufactured goods from Asia, and second the fact that its image is so unattractive to "British" African states that they refuse Associated status. I believe that Britain should, before entering, try to obtain a public statement, by the leaders of the whole North Atlantic trading group, that their objective in re-arranging their trading policies is to shift more of the wealth towards the developing countries. This would help to put the European Common Market in a better perspective, and would help to ensure that wise policies prevailed after our entry.

David Daiches:

I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED in the unity of Europe and emotionally I am favourably disposed towards the idea of Britain "going into Europe." At the same time, I am unhappy at the prospect of Britain joining a high-tariff consortium of rich European nations which inevitably adopts a cold war posture. The old man's Europe of De Gaulle and Adenauer seems to me very remote from the brave new Europe we ought to look for. The present proposals would have been admirable in 1815. What we need now is something far more imaginative and world-wide.

On the purely economic advantages to Britain, I am struck by the radical divisions of opinion among expert economists and by the admitted impossibility of predicting anything with accuracy. The issue is in fact political, and in spite of my natural pro-European bias, I am distrustful for the reasons given.

C. H. Waddington:

I HAVE NOT, actually, been very excited about the "Britain into Europe' question. In my professional work as a scientist I am already a member of a community which is not only "supernational" in the sense of embracing the countries of Western Europe, but which is very close to being truly international on a world scale. Thus it has not seemed to me that it would make much difference to my intellectual life whether Britain joined Europe or not. I doubt, also, whether it would make much difference in the wider intellectual world which extends beyond biology to general philosophy and literature. For these reasons I have thought that the major questions are, firstly, economic ones, about which I am not qualified to judge; and secondly, political. On the political side there seem to be two issues. Britain seems to be in rather a stagnant, unenterprising, and uncreative mood. It is arguable that joining Europe would jolt her out of it, but the change required is really an internal one, and it is not at all clear that an alteration in external relations will produce it. But the over-

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riding political question of the day seems to me undoubtedly to be the necessity to organise effective international agencies which can operate on a world-scale, or something near it. For Britain to join the Europe of de Gaulle and Adenauer might work out favourably from this point of view, or again it might not; in any case it does not seem to be directly relevant to the most pressing issue.

Wayland Young:

CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES make judgments change, but at the moment (30.11.62) I'm for in because I judge that:

1. *Economic.* The argument that we need growth industries for prosperity, that we need a big market and a big general economic base for growth industries, and that we need prosperity not only for our own sakes but also to have some left over to help the underdeveloped countries, including the New Commonwealth, outweighs the arguments that at the moment we do more trade with the Commonwealth and EFTA than with EEC, and that the change in the trading pattern will be uncomfortable.

2. *Political.* With careful handling, regional unions, confederations or federations may tend towards the development of a world security authority. A West European political union will do this better with Britain in, and best with Scandinavia and the neutrals as well.

3. *Military.* Unless Scandinavia and the neutrals come in, and unless the incredible is achieved and all the members of NATO feel equally and adequately protected by it, a West European Union will clearly become a nuclear military power in its own right. The existence of three super-powers in the world instead of two (or four instead of three if China catches up) would make the world more dangerous and disarmament more complicated. But our staying out of the Market will not prevent this, and by going in we may be able to make the other European governments more inclined to take the only possible course for ending the multi-dimensional arms race we shall then be embroiled in, namely, disarmament.

Desmond Donnelly:

(1) EMOTIONAL: I am three generations Anglo-Indian and the first member of my family for a very long time to live in Britain. I have travelled widely to places as far away as China but I never consciously felt myself a European until I landed at Idlewild. It was not just the American drink and food but the different attitudes of mind; and I did not feel at home again until I reached Mexico City where the European influence recurs.

(2) Political: In my view, for good or ill, by the logic of history and the facts of geopolitics, Britain's destiny lies with Europe. That twenty-mile ditch which has saved us from the camp-fires of invaders for 900 years is no longer a viable military obstacle. It is not possible to put propellers on to the British Isles and to drive them away to the Indian Ocean to form part of the Afro-Asian bloc. Therefore we have no alternative to joining EEC if we wish to have a part in influencing our own political destiny.

(3) Economic: Mr. Gaitskell says the argument is 50-50. On figures he is right. In practical industrial terms: No. The principal factor in expansion is confidence. The principal factor in creating confidence is opportunity. The glittering opportunity of joining Europe is something that is fascinating nearly every business executive in Britain—and this is a decisive factor in promoting growth. Certainly, failure to join EEC will create a major lack of confidence in our mixed economy.

Sebastian Haffner:

FROM MY DISTANCE it looks as if Britain is to-day discussing the wrong alternatives, namely: Commonwealth or Europe. The right alternatives, in my opinion, would be: America or Little England.

If Britains wants to stay in the Great Power game, the natural and obvious course for her would be to accede, together with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, to the United States. She would then become an important and influential part of a maritime, English-speaking Great Power of 260 millions, naturally held together by the same language, law, institutions, manners, and memories, and the same sense of sea power. There would be nothing new or artificial about the creation of this Power; it would be a reunification, nothing more. Moreover, this reunification has in fact, if not in form, taken place already: in the second world war, when the Anglo-American Union received its baptism of fire.

Alternatively, if Britain would, above all, to her own self be true, she would now have to contract out of the Great Power game, radically cut her commitments, and become an inward-looking, neutral, isolationist island, small but select, a greater Switzerland of the seas, engaged in specialised industries and trade, dedicated to progress, prosperity, welfare, provincial culture, social experiment, humanitarian activities, and the preservation of quality. It is often said this would be philistine and unexciting. To me it would seem rather an adventure, by no means without great risks and dangers, which however a people with the commercial and political flair and skill of the English might well be able to handle, if left to its own devices. It would certainly re-attract to Britain the respectful curiosity and restore the universal snob-appeal which have recently wandered away from her. The chief advantage of this scheme, however, would be that it is what most of the British people really seem to want to-day. It would therefore mobilise and engage many energies now frustrated, disgruntled, or put to positively harmful, obstructive uses.

Anyhow, each of the above alternatives has a lot

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to be said for it. The other two, Commonwealth and Europe, have not. The post-1945, non-British Commonwealth, that bastard child of guilt and vanity, is simply a millstone round Britain's neck. The sooner it is cast off the better. Going into Europe and going in for "Europe" is a natural policy for the Germans and Italians, who have done practically nothing else since the Middle Ages; at a pinch, *pace* Louis XIV and Napoleon, it is a possible policy even for the French (who may, however, find a fly in the ointment yet). For England it means repudiating her whole history and acting totally out of character. If it were not so serious, it would be really funny to observe the British trying to join a household they so manifestly dislike —gibing at Adenauer and de Gaulle all the time and yet asking for a *ménage à trois* with them.

Fifteen years ago such an about-turn would have had the virtue of generosity; to-day it is merely pathetic. Then the British would have appeared as the unexpected rescuers and leaders of Europe in her hour of need; to-day they appear merely as people who would like to reap where they have not sown. The Europeans themselves look at this oddly belated, sudden, and superficial conversion with a mixture of puzzlement and suspicion: Is it, they wonder, a panicky, despairing act of renegading (as it appears on the surface), or is it perhaps a last sly attempt of sabotage? Have the English suddenly, for no clearly recognisable reason, ceased to be what they were for half a millennium, or do they merely hope to wreck from within what they think they can no longer prevent from without? Either way, the European "Europeans" have no real use for England; and secretly wish they were spared the awkwardness of either accommodating or refusing an unwanted intruder.

Alan Ross:

THE Common Market is a far cry from the days when writers had honest, honourable, and morally decipherable political commitments. In theory, of course, we must reject our form of bigotry and isolation and go into Europe. But whose Europe? Adenauer's? De Gaulle's? A Europe that is liberal and progressive, or Catholic-reactionary and crypto-Fascist? In theory, of course, we owe a political —if no longer economic—allegiance to the Commonwealth, but is this better served by being part of a European community, with our economic bets hedged, or being out of it? Macmillan and Gaitskell have put the cases for and against almost equally persuasively. Professional economists, regardless of Party, use the same facts for wildly different forecasts.

On the grounds of pure self-interest, the idea of a Lancia or a Ferrari (or any cruder commodity) with the purchase tax knocked off it is immediately seductive. But will it, in fact, be knocked off? It seems far from certain. Against this, there is obviously potential unemployment with consequent lowering of living standards, especially at the humbler levels.

Again, emotional prejudices die hard; five years of fighting Nazis leave one disinclined for a hazardous flirtation with a race in whom many of the most disagreeable tendencies plainly remain.

One can trust only one's instincts, it seems; and in a world so disproportionately dominated by Red China, the Soviet Union, and the United States, such historical sense as one has makes the European gamble appear logically the right one to take.

Woodrow Wyatt:

I WANT US to join the Common Market because it is one of the most exciting projects in human history and quite the most exciting of my lifetime.

Despite frequent and murderous wars European culture and achievements have had a vast effect on the entire world. A united Western Europe, not racked by wars, will do far better.

With Britain in the Common Market it will contain 220,000,000 people who are the cleverest, most skilled, best educated in the world. Its power will be far greater than that of either America or Russia.

Western Europe is sick of war. Its weight is bound to be on the side of caution where risks of world war are concerned. It has had a long acquaintance and understanding of the developing countries. The funds it has already made available, and is proposing to make available in the future, for aid to less fortunate areas will be large and helpful.

Of course Britain will lose sovereignty. A very good thing too because she will be pooling it with other nations in Europe. Is it not better that a number of nations should speak as one than with the hideous cacophony that has been heretofore customary?

But Britain will not be submerged. It is quite clear that under any voting system devised Britain's voice will be emphatically heard and she will have, perhaps, the largest part in devising the common policies.

De Gaulle and Adenauer can make difficulties for Britain now but once Britain is in the Common Market the balance of power is transformed. Norway and Denmark who will also come in at the same time will support us. So will Italy, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg. Germany is unlikely to be unsympathetic to the British general approach —it is de Gaulle who will be isolated if there are disagreements, not Britain.

Much stress is put on the material advantage from having a huge customs free area. This is considerable. But just as important is the opening up of new prospects for the mind.

We will become citizens of Europe in a true sense drawing on the rich and varied background of all the countries in the Common Market, not merely upon one. The liberation of ingenuity in industrial, technical, academic, and artistic fields will be enormous.

If Britain remains an island I can foresee nothing but stagnation economically, a fast diminishing influence on world affairs, and a country as trivial and insignificant as Switzerland or Sweden and about as safe as India.

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Rayner Heppenstall:

GEOGRAPHICALLY, the British archipelago is part of Europe. Linguistically, we belong to an English-speaking community diffused over the globe. These islands cannot be towed across the Atlantic or into the southern hemisphere. Whatever happens, we expect to go on speaking and writing English. In feeling (and "culturally") I have always been European-minded. But I am also English-language-minded. The evident present need to divide the world up into large economico-political blocks has put us in a situation which can, I think, truly be described as tragical. There are two ways in which the world might be tidied up in respect of ourselves, and I would put my (alas, inconsiderable) weight behind either of them if it seemed likely to happen.

1. We go into Europe, and by stages all Europe adopts (in our case, re-adopts) French as a common legal, administrative and, as far as possible, learned and literary language. We of course adopt the decimal system and drive on the right of the road. There cease to be separate British trade unions (good riddance). NATO is disbanded and replaced by a purely European military alliance. The Commonwealth (already pretty meaningless) is disbanded: Canada joins the U.S.A., and we do what we can about Australia and New Zealand. Should we find ourselves at war with the Russians, the Americans will have to do what they think best, but meanwhile there must not be one trace of American military or para-military organisation left in Europe.

2. The U.S. ceases to be merely the United States *of America*. A larger body takes in the twelve states of Canada and Newfoundland, the ten of Australasia, and the (I suggest) six of the British Isles. New York may well be the capital, but voting power will be so distributed that we might expect the next president of the United States to be a Queenslander, an Ulsterman, a northern or southern Englishman and so on.

In either case, British monarchy terminates quietly with the death of the present Queen, to whom no successor is appointed. In the case of (1) emigration on a very large scale may be expected. There is no objection to this. The persistently monoglot should be granted every facility. I fancy I should stay, but am not certain.

Donald McLachlan:

I WILL TRY TO RESTRICT my forward-looking to the date at which my grandchildren will be starting to earn a living: 25–35 years. Within that period I see the cold war going on but without major war or nuclear exchanges. There will be a ruthless and fervent struggle of ideas, science, and wealth. I want us to be on the winning side.

The question then is: how do we best back America, because I see no chance of the Russians making it possible or advantageous for us to join them. We do that best, as an English-speaking country which will always be in a special relationship to the United States, by entering Europe and keeping its political and economic evolution from moving into opposition to or independence of the United States. If we do not do this, then the European group will become not only economically dangerous to us but politically inimical to the United States; and we would be forced into a pitiful choice between two partners at a time when we had become too weak to bargain.

This conception of our opportunity and role seems to me to fit into our past history. Only for a short period of the 19th century were we a world power in the full military and political sense of the word. Before and after that period we were an alliance-seeking and coalition-building power, both in Europe and beyond.

I see no other political or social vision that can give our society a sense of purpose comparable to contemporary nationalism in backward countries or the imperialism of Russia and China. I once thought that the Atlantic community was a purpose for the rest of this century; but I am now convinced that the Americans themselves will not be ready for it until Europe looks like becoming a great nuisance.

We should not go into Europe with our eyes shining and our arms outstretched but with a thoroughly business-like manner. The experience is bound to bring surprises, shocks, strains, and even disappointment of the kind that a great deal of our political activity in the last forty years has been trying to avert. We are going to do willingly some of the things that we would have had to do if we had lost the last war.

IF WE ARE HONEST, *many of us will admit that we are in a great state of confusion about the Common Market. We probably have not read the Rome Treaty and are puzzled by the arguments about the advantages of "the economies of large-scale units and markets." But one thing is clear to me. This is a fundamental question about political values. It is not just a matter of whether we get richer at the rate of 2½ per cent or 4½ per cent a year. Naturally I object to being thought a troglodyte (as opposed to being dynamic, realistic, vital, and modern). What I keep asking is whether the Common Market will allow and encourage us simultaneously to be more civilised and more compassionate—compassionate and civilised in world terms and not just in the Baldwinian philosophy of Troglodyte-on-the-Water. But the answers I get are not reassuring. The state of the prisons, the conditions of the prisoners, the treatment of social workers and the punishments of public assistance in Germany and France can hardly be classified as modern or dynamic. Perhaps all this is irrelevant. If it is, I will cheerfully go on being thought a troglodyte.*

Richard M. Titmuss

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Barbara Ward Jackson:

My starting point with the Common Market is not so much Europe as the post-colonial world situation created largely by Europe. I doubt if one can study the present condition of the "developing" continents—above all Africa and South East Asia—without seeing how profoundly it has been moulded by the colonial encounter with Western Europe. The colonial powers involved their dependencies willy-nilly in a world-wide economy, gave them the first stimulus towards modernisation but left them largely without the means—widespread education, growing industry, productive farming—of achieving it fully. Independence finds them caught between two worlds, a traditional world from which they have not wholly emerged, a modern one which they find it very difficult to enter. No social situation is more potentially destructive.

I cannot but feel that Western Europe, having created the dilemma, has a direct responsibility to help in its resolution. This is not simply a matter of aid—of capital and skills exported to the developing lands at low or no cost. This is important, but even more important is the creation of an international economy in which this capital and these skills can be, in some measure, *earned*. Falling primary prices have largely nullified the aid given in recent years. India's Third Plan is hopelessly impeded by difficulties inherent in expanding Indian exports. The wealthy nations, most of which are in post-colonial Europe, have to think in terms of more than aid—though many of them are not yet thinking adequately even of that. They have to think in a more lasting and creative way about the building of an international economy which helps and does not impede the development of the poor, ex-colonial lands.

My hope that Britain will enter the Common Market springs in the main from my belief that its entry would facilitate the three or four crucial things that have to be done if humanity's housekeeping is to make sense: (1) the Western powers must maintain their own growth and buoyancy; (2) they must make these buoyant markets more and more open to developing nations even if in some cases—such as cheap textiles or soya beans—they must themselves abandon certain areas of industry and farming; (3) they must support world-wide commodity agreement to maintain primary prices; (4) they must see that the flow of capital is not only large enough but also shared in such a way that it does not aggravate the problem of the Western balance of payments.

One could name other policies. These are crucial. Yet I doubt if they will be followed in a sustained and systematic way unless Britain enters Europe as a liberalising element and pulls America along behind.

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G. M. Young and His England

By John Gross

ONE REASON why G. M. Young proved so powerful and persuasive an interpreter of the Victorian age was that there was so much of the Victorian in his own make-up. "Read until you hear people talking": he followed his own prescription, but in any case he started out by sharing a good many Victorian assumptions and prejudices. He was fond of recalling how, as a child, he had glimpsed Gladstone driving back to Downing Street and seen the fresh wreaths on Browning's grave. Yet his studied air of being a belated, rather picturesque survival can be misleading. Viewed from another angle Young was a writer of the 'thirties, just as much in his own way as any contributor to *New Signatures* or the *Left Review*. He published nothing until he was fifty; then the dyke burst, and books and articles followed in rapid succession. His masterpiece, *Victorian England: the Portrait of an Age*, which he later expanded, first appeared in 1936. Among Young's other books were three collections of essays, from which Mr. Handcock has now gathered all those dealing directly with the Victorian period, adding a personal memoir.[1]

Young's major writings belong to the 'thirties; but he was first stung into action by what he used to call in his testy moments "the Dirty Twenties," the era of debunking. His point of departure can be seen in an essay on "Victorian History," which he later rejected as "in places sadly crude, and in places badly rhetorical," and which Mr. Handcock has not reprinted. "Mr. Strachey," he says in the concluding paragraph, "has much to answer for." Young was angered at the glib rejection by Strachey's followers of a whole epoch, at the ignorant guying of what he felt, what he *knew* to be a major civilisation. His writing is always directed against readers who, by falling under the Stracheyan spell or otherwise, have lost sight of how Victorian culture hung together, how it developed, how it faced and overcame its crises.

This is what lies behind and justifies the most peculiar feature of his work. The first thing which strikes any reader of Young is how much he is missing. Every page is crammed with cryptic allusions, semi-private jokes, obscure names, and multilingual quotations. But guidance is scrupulously withheld: virtually no sources, translations, or explanatory notes are given. The technique is never to provide a reference except in the few cases where it isn't necessary.[2] Even the rare polymath capable of decoding all the clues would have to be on constant alert, since the glancing allusions often consist of no more than an unobtrusive phrase, or sometimes a single word.

All this may sound little more than a tiresome brand of exhibitionism often found in the *belles lettres* of fifty years ago, and certainly Young was a virtuoso in the art of plonking. But why is he still effective where the old-fashioned Bookmanship of a Saintsbury nowadays looks pretty ludicrous? Partly because he has a lighter touch, and skilfully avoids the hackneyed instance; but largely because his motive is not to promote cosiness, but to shame the reader into a sense of devastating ignorance.

If Young's parade of learning is deliberately daunting, however, it is also meant to tantalise. The reader is humbled, but at the same time encouraged to dig deeper—and is, in fact, usually won over, since Young was an attractive writer. He occasionally lapsed into a thatched-and-timbered style (never say "Christmas" where you can say "Christmastide"), but for the most part he was a master of good English prose: in his best work, every sentence tells. Nor did

[1] *Victorian Essays*. By G. M. YOUNG. Chosen and introduced by W. H. Handcock. Oxford, 7s. 6d.

[2] Mr. Handcock makes a realistic concession, which Young himself would doubtless have found decadent, by supplying translations for the Latin and Greek.

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his quarrel with Strachey damp down his wit, or prevent him from savouring misplaced pomp and circumstance (*e.g.*, Mrs. Barbauld on William Roscoe, Renaissance scholar and Granadaland worthy: "The historian of the Age of Leo has brought into cultivation the extensive tract of Chatmoss"). But he would have argued that he learned his irony not from Strachey but from the 19th century itself: that our sense of what was ludicrous in Early Victorian manners stems largely from Late Victorian satire.

Yet despite his flow of epigrams, anecdotes, and gossip (and his tongue was surely in his cheek when he quoted on the title-page of *Portrait of an Age* "Servants talk about People: Gentlefolk discuss Things"), Young was too serious-minded an author to reduce broad social problems to personal terms. If no incident is too trivial, no detail too small, it is only so that the web may be closely woven. He was fond of the unexpected analogy and the piquant juxtaposition—perhaps too fond, but they served to make his points dramatically. Another essayist might have been content to mention the link between 18th-century benevolence and Evangelical philanthropy, and left it at that; Young goes on to assemble a cluster of events which all took place in the late 1750s—Dr. Johnson's plea for the French prisoners of war, the birth of Wilberforce and Clarkson, the earliest recorded use of the word *inhumanity* in connection with the treatment of animals. (He often builds heavily on the history of a term: he can start a long train of thought by pointing out that the word *unemployment* only came into common use in the 1880s, or that the first Old Boy of a public school made his appearance in 1840.)

How DID Young shape the materials which he amassed, and what was his real theme? He had too firm a grasp of the solid fact, and too lively a feeling for the endlessly intricate lattice-work of social relationships, to succumb to dogmatism or system-building. In *The Portrait of an Age* he isolates now one strand and now another, without propounding an all-inclusive theory. (There is even a chaste refusal to provide chapter-headings.) Still, he wrote with passion, and he had his bias. His underlying argument, brutally compressed, was that the relatively compact civilisation of early Victorian England had splintered in the late Victorian age of finance and imperialism, above all through the lack of an adequate national system of secondary education. In the earlier period "the disinterested intelligence" flourished in the midst of a highly conservative society; but "what failed was the great Victorian public," and England in 1900 was unworthy of England in 1870. Needless to say, Young took the virtues of a cohesive culture as self-evident, and was convinced that the process of disintegration had gone much further in our own times. He could deplore the loose bandying about of abstractions by others, but he had his own watchword: Continuity.

YOUNG'S TRADITIONALISM was a highly emotional affair, but a certain hard-headedness makes it more plausible than, say, the romancing of *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*. He wasn't one of those conservative critics of our culture (they sometimes dress up as radicals) who are really rejecting industrial society altogether. On the contrary, he showed great sympathy for the Early Victorian conviction, whether embodied in Macaulay or the Rochdale Pioneers, that material and moral progress went hand in hand. He spent most of his working life as a civil servant, and his great hero was his first chief, Sir Robert Morant, a man of astounding energy who devised a national system of education for Siam while still in his twenties, and returned home to handle major innovations in education and national insurance and help set up the Ministry of Health. Young's own attitude to affairs was largely that of the administrator: when he lingers over an unsung Victorian hero, it is less likely to be an empire-builder or ripe eccentric than someone as austere as Richard Cross, Home Secretary and industrial legislator of the 1870s.

But to dwell on the civil servant in Young is to make him sound more detached than he himself would ever have claimed to be. He was a man of the right, whose articles on contemporary themes were full of indirect party propaganda; my guess is that he had more of a hand than has been recognised in making intellectual converts for Conservatism after 1945. It was then that George Orwell, bracketing him with Lord Elton and A. P. Herbert, dismissed him as a silly-clever neo-Tory. Orwell wasn't always over-scrupulous about whom he lumped together, and neo-Tories who can write as eloquently as Young did about the "contracted horizons" and "helpless furies" of Burke are not very easy to find, and more interesting than most. But, nonetheless, Young on the modern world is often hard to stomach. At best he circles round the point, at worst he can be chillingly remote. (There are moments when his cadences remind me of that blood-curdling and never-to-be-sufficiently-pondered revelation of the high Establishment mind, the volume of memoirs by Lord Halifax called—fairly inevitably—*Fulness of Days*.)

This is the context in which his Victorian

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essays must be read, useful as it is to have them together by themselves in one volume. Yet, even where the topic is Victorian, contemporary prejudices creep through. The present collection opens with an article originally written for *The Times* to mark the centenary of Queen Victoria's accession. It is a brisk, lively survey of English politics in 1837, including three or four paragraphs on Britain's intervention in the struggle between the constitutional government of Spain and the Carlist insurrectionists. Despite Wellington's protests, a British legion of "riff-raff" was raised and sent to support the government. As the conflict dragged on, "all the common incidents of war in Spain, the shooting of prisoners, murder of priests, and destruction of convents, were enacted on their familiar stage." In their indifference to human rights, "there was not a *real* to choose" between Carlists and constitutionalists. Young has his fun about the grotesque aspects of this obscure war (there was a quarrel between the acting commander of the legion, O'Connell, and the Spanish general, O'Donnell), but the implications for 1937 are too broad to be missed. One grows uncomfortably aware that the article first appeared in *The Times*—the *Times* of Geoffrey Dawson. And, strange as it may seem, there isn't a single mention of the Spanish Civil War in Young's life of Baldwin. Indeed, although the Baldwin book doesn't attempt to gloss over the dear, dead days when the defence of the realm was entrusted to Sir Thomas Inskip, and although it provoked controversy and rejoinders when it was published, future readers are likely to be struck by how close Young stood in spirit to his subject, and to the era when exhausted statesmen congratulated one another on their *gravitas* and *aequanimitas* instead of revising their policies. Victorian England was impregnable, and could afford not to think too hard about the brute realities of power-politics. But anyone of Young's generation ought to have recognised that there are some convulsions where the old gentlemanly standards—the standards of the educator and administrator—do not begin to apply.

YOUNG'S WISDOM ABOUT the Victorians was that of a veteran, but there is something slightly morbid about the way in which he enjoyed posing as the ancient of days. After all, he was the almost exact contemporary not of Bagehot, but of Stalin and James Joyce. What he would never admit was that if it was essential to understand the Victorians, it was first necessary to escape from them and let in some fresh air. Strachey, in his small, stylish way, was a liberator (and far from butchering the Victorians, incidentally, prompted a fresh wave of

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interest in them). But there were more important writers to whom Young was incapable of doing justice. Shaw, for instance:

> I was never able to see anything profoundly original in the satire of Mr. Shaw: it always seemed to me to be the old Victorian tricks played on the old Victorian characters: most of the ideas came from the Philosophic Radicals or Ruskin and most of the jokes from Oxford or *Punch*.

This is the Shaw who wrote that "all who achieve real distinction in life begin as revolutionists," who once said that Marx makes us see the 19th century "as if it were a cloud passing down the wind, changing its shape and fading as it goes." Which may not have made him a Marxist, or even quite so staunch a revolutionist as he supposed—but the point is that like almost every late Victorian writer who counts, of whatever political complexion, his strongest initial urge was to break out of the stuffy, overfurnished drawing-room of mid-Victorian middle-class culture. For that matter, the early Victorians themselves only accomplished what they did by turning their backs on the 18th century. Not entirely, no doubt: there are no clean breaks in history, while, equally, throughout the Victorian period there were individuals like Leslie Stephen and John Morley who knew a tremendous amount about 18th-century civilisation. But far more characteristic were indifference or lack of understanding. Whatever else early Victorian literature has to show, it isn't *Augustan England: The Portrait of an Age*.

But there was one very famous early Victorian survey of English society in a previous age: Macaulay's third chapter. More than any other writer, Macaulay was Young's master and model: one of the last things he published was the preface to a Macaulay anthology, and there is a piece on the historian in *Victorian Essays*. Compared with Macaulay's fantastic telephone-exchange of a mind, even Young looks narrow in his range of reference (though he was wider in his sympathies). But both men shared the ability to summon up at will any fragment of their reading, however slight, by way of illustration. Illustration is the word—if Macaulay refers in passing to Dryden or Swift or Corporal Trim, it is to make an event more vivid or to clothe a dry fact with flesh. He assumes that the reader has the English classics, the established corpus of polite literature, at his command.

In Young the notion of a common fund of recognised masterpieces is beginning to disappear, or turning into a game. But there is gain as well as loss. Young is uneasily aware, as Macaulay scarcely was, that great writers can provide more than documentary evidence about the manners or the political warfare of the times in which they lived. They also register impulses deep below the surface of day-to-day affairs, and serve as the truest index of a society's values or shortcomings. In *The Portrait of an Age* Young recalls that in 1874 a group of Liberals, with the support of Lord John Russell, met to congratulate Bismarck and the Kaiser on the decrees which they were promulgating against the Catholic Church: decrees which led, among other things, to a party of nuns sailing into exile from Bremen the following winter. He then immediately quotes a powerful stanza from *The Wreck of the Deutschland*. "As life is short and knowledge boundless," he continues, "is there any canon by which we can determine whether, in the history of Victorian England, Lord Russell's letter or Gerard Hopkins' poem better deserves to be recorded?" An impossible question to answer, but a hard one to shrug off.

HISTORY TEXT-BOOKS often have, tucked away at the back, a melancholy little section on The Arts, largely unconnected with everything that has gone before. Young, with his almost compulsive need to make connections, and with his well-marked literary tastes, would never have been guilty of anything so flat and second-hand. At the same time, his close familiarity with the Victorian public's response to its writers makes much modern literary criticism look shallow or out of focus. Yet, when every allowance has been made for changes in fashion, Young's discussions of poetry and fiction remain much the least satisfactory part of his work. He can characterise an author admirably, in broad outline; his sketch of Thackeray is both witty and just:

> The Railway is the great Victorian symbol, and I often picture the people of that age as a railway crowd, all pushing, scrambling, and shoving—backwards or forwards—at once. And what a journey lies before them, what mountains those tunnels will pierce, what valleys those airy viaducts will span, what novelties, what adventures, what delight! And among them I see a passenger whose joy is darkened by one anxiety—he is not quite sure if his ticket entitles him to travel first-class.

But when he tries to get to grips with Tennyson or Hardy's verse, he can't manage much more than a string of favourite passages, garlanded with well-turned comments which are usually unenlightening and sometimes downright inept.

It was Dickens, though, who presented Young with his worst headache. Here was undeniably the supreme Victorian master, untouched by the grand old fortifying classical curriculum and

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contemptuous of the governing classes. In the *Portrait* his Boodle-and-Coodle parliamentary satire is brushed aside as tedious and ignorant, which it usually is, but the story doesn't end there. It goes without saying that Young was soaked in Dickens, and as likely to throw in a reference to Cousin Feenix or Charley Hexam ("surely the most detestable boy on record") as to an actual person. But he recognised how subversive the later Dickens was, and resisted. In *Bleak House* "the wheels are grinding"; in *Hard Times* "they can hardly move the machine." And "if *Little Dorrit* were an Elizabethan play, critics would have been ready to prove that it was the work of an imitator with some incomparable scenes by the master's hand." In other words, the Civil Service is *not* prepared to forgive the Circumlocution Office.

The man who bridled up at *Little Dorrit* was even crustier about modern literature. It is always a pleasure to hear someone being rude about T. S. Eliot, but it doesn't dispose of Eliot's great gifts to say no more than that he was "the first man who thought of translating French *vers libre* into broken-down Elizabethan stage verse." Young didn't close his mind completely to post-1918 literature, but his judgments on it were wildly erratic. *Victorian Essays* closes with a lament on the breakdown of literary tradition which mingles some good sense (on I. A. Richards, for instance) with mere cussedness, like the mutterings on Shaw quoted earlier. In the final paragraph, Young sees the one hopeful sign as the growing number of gifted women writers. With the stiff gallantry of an old celibate, he pays his respects to Helen Waddell and the author of *The Years*. Distinguished writers, but it's all sadly wide of the mark.

Underlying Young's distaste for the present was a deep nostalgia for the past. Most of the time he kept it under control; he was too good a historian not to know that Golden Ages have a habit of turning to lead as one draws near them. Civilisation may depend on a diffuse love of "the Past," but no one in his right mind could love the 1840s. But at his more tremulous moments Young can slip unnoticed from praising "the life of the university-bred classes in England of the mid-19th century" to sighing over "that walled close where all the pride and piety, the peace and beauty of a vanished world seem to have made their last home under the spire of St. Mary of Salisbury." Humphry House made the very good point that one reason for the beauty of the Cathedral Close at Salisbury was a negative one: "the almost total

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absence of Victorian architecture." To bring it in as the climax to an already perverse theory about Victorian England was "a grotesque perversity." But the passage prompts another reflection. Young was a man filled with the spirit of veneration. He was also, Mr. Handcock tells us, an unflinching rationalist. But many of the traditions which he revered draw their full force only from religious sanction. It is this gap which makes us stir uncomfortably when Young pulls out all the stops in a set-piece on the Coronation ceremony, or a preposterous note on the Abdication ("the sight, and sound, of the people making up its mind in twos and threes, in railway carriages and market-places, was the most impressive spectacle I have ever known"). The Coronation is only all that Young says it is if you believe—literally believe—that a monarch is the Lord's Anointed. Take away that belief, and the road lies open for Crawfie and Richard Dimbleby.

FOR ALL HIS TALK of the disinterested intelligence, Young was an intensely emotional writer. But then a disinterested, even-tempered man could never have written a book as exciting as the *Portrait of an Age*. Nor are Young's historical verdicts badly biased, in any obvious sense. There is no crude attempt to blacken Chartism or to whitewash the Poor Law, to play down chapel at the expense of church, to mitigate the horrors of child-labour, cholera, drinking-water brown with fæcal particles, women stripped to the waist fighting with broken bottles outside gin-palaces. Yet it is impossible that his prejudices should not have coloured his picture, subtly modifying his methods of selection and arrangement. He felt strongly that "the real, central theme of History is not what happened, but what people felt about it when it was happening"—which sounds less impressive when he goes on to explain that what he means is "the conversation of the people who counted." But the people who didn't count, the hundreds interviewed by Mayhew and the millions investigated by Charles Booth, had tongues, too. What does Young leave out, and how much does he distort? Does he exaggerate the compactness of early Victorian civilisation? Is he too ready to take the word for the deed, or even the intention? These are questions for an expert: the casual untutored reader can only hazard a casual untutored guess. But a full-dress critique of Young would be something worth having, since he is both of permanent literary interest and likely to go on being influential for a long time to come. And it would be even more useful if a historian could be persuaded to annotate the 200-odd pages of *Early Victorian England*. Assuming, that is, that he could spare a few years for the job.

Valéry as Social Thinker

History and Politics. By PAUL VALÉRY. *Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd.*, 50s. Bollinger Series, XLV, *Pantheon*.

DURING his lifetime, Valéry had the reputation, among certain groups of French people, of being the most intelligent man of the 20th century. This was the belief instilled into me by the liveliest of my teachers, and although some sneering, discordant voices were to be heard, it was a belief I took on trust, as other people may accept some article of religious or political faith. No final truth about human nature had yet been discovered, but there was Valéry, rising every morning at four-thirty to study the mystery of his own mind, and filling his endless notebooks with particles of irreducible thought. He, at least, had taken the metaphor of the thinking reed seriously. Even now, the image of the lamp glowing in the cold dawn and the fountain-pen working tirelessly over the white paper gives me a poetic thrill.

But since they came out in a facsimile edition, the twenty-nine thousand pages of the notebooks themselves have proved something of a disappointment. Perhaps I had read and re-read Valéry's published works so much that I had become too familiar with his mind to be surprised or refreshed by anything more he had to say. Perhaps his powers of thought were not equal to his adoration of thought; in one of the later notebooks, there occurs the pathetic sentence: *"J'ai passé ma vie dans la contemplation de ma faiblesse d'esprit,"* and although this may be tantamount to Beethoven's expression of disgust with the piano after he had composed the Diabelli Variations—that is, the despairing cry of a genius whose ambition is so great that it reduces his masterpieces to insignificance—I am not sure that Valéry was as supreme in the handling of language as Beethoven was in the manipulation of sound. Ivor Winters has said that in *Ebauche d'un serpent* Valéry produced the greatest short poem ever written and, as far as my knowledge goes, I would agree with this; I have never come across any poem which satisfied the demands of sound and sense so completely and was at the same time such a perfect extended metaphor. But, as a thinker, Valéry stimulates and then disappoints. No contemporary writer produced so many brilliant aphorisms and proved so incapable of constructing a continuous statement about the major themes he broached. He himself admitted this,

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of course, and in his more pugnacious moods argued that any continuous statement was bound to be false, since man is an organic, perpetually changing creature, whose moments of consciousness are disparate and probably irreconcilable. Nevertheless he succeeded in constructing two or three great poems, and he admired great works of architecture, which solidify moments of consciousness into a concrete whole. It is clear that he longed to produce an all-embracing intellectual system and that the last part of his life was clouded by a sense of failure. But he remains one of the most interesting minds of the last generation, and I confess that my admiration for him has been, rightly or wrongly, little short of idolatry.

I MAKE THESE REMARKS because, on looking through this volume, the English reader unacquainted with Valéry will probably wonder why some people think so highly of him. Professor Jackson Mathews and the Bollingen Foundation are to be congratulated on the immense care with which they are bringing out the complete works in English, yet in this instance their piety may have done Valéry some disservice. Almost half of this 600-page book consists of very slight pieces—prefaces, interviews, radio-addresses—which are no more than polite gestures devoid of any intellectual merit. It would have been kinder to allow these occasional talks and bread-and-butter writings to sink into oblivion, and to fill up the space with some of the many jottings from the *Cahiers* relating to history and politics which, chaotic though they are, occasionally open up new vistas.

The admirer is also disturbed to see how much the famous prose passages, such as the great dirge on the fragility of civilisation: *Nous autres, civilisations, nous savons maintenant que nous sommes mortelles*, lose in translation. The Bollingen version is very scrupulous (with the worst will in the world I can find few definite flaws), but the peculiar resonance of the French has disappeared and, with it, a good deal of the interest. Valéry was as much a poet in prose as in verse and, like General de Gaulle, he often gives commonplaces the dignity of perfect rhythmical utterance. This means that, in English, he may produce the disastrous effect of re-discovering the obvious with a great show of intellectual effort, because the delicacy of his verbal associations or the sonorousness of the syllables is no longer perceptible.

These reservations having been made, what remains? In the first place, a very acute, and in some respects prophetic, analysis of the state of the world. Valéry, having reached maturity before the First World War, was obsessed with the change-over, during his own lifetime, from what might be called regional politics to world politics. "The age of the finite world has begun" was one of his aphorisms, and it is characteristically more pointed in French: *Le temps du monde fini commence*. He keeps repeating that the old balances of power are outdated, that the development of science has at last begun to make political strength proportionate to size of population and availability of natural resources, that the so-called lessons of history no longer apply in the new situation, that nationalism is archaic, and so on. Perhaps the most vigorously argued part of his account of the modern scene is his attack on history and and his denunciation of the approximations of politics. Again and again, he comes back to the idea that history can never be a genuine "reconstruction of the past," but must always be a construction of the historian's present and is therefore inevitably an expression of contemporary assumptions and perhaps a weapon in contemporary politics. Just as frequently he points out that politics is the domain of "myth"; society oscillates between order and disorder, according to the changing strength of certain fictitious values—money, law, religion, class, etc. Politicians, financiers, judges, priests, monarchs are *les préposés aux Choses Vagues*: administrators of vaguenesses that have so far never been reduced to any intelligible principles.

Valéry carries his negative attack so far that he can be termed both a Nihilist and an Anarchist, and I think his essential remarks would have been relevant at any period of history; not having a detailed knowledge of previous periods, he tends to imagine them as having been more coherent than they probably were. The logical conclusion of his criticism of history, as he himself sees at times, is a kind of Existentialist despair (although he does not use the term Existentialist) about the possibility of thought. After all, what happened to me five minutes ago is already in the past, and I can only "recapture" it, very imperfectly, by an imaginative effort depending on certain assumptions of which I may strive in vain to become aware. In this sense, the most important part of life takes place in the imagination; we cannot live in the present, because the present is by definition that point in time about which we cannot think, since it is immediate; we can think only about the past and the future, and we think of both, as best we can, in terms of each other. Furthermore, each of us, through no fault of his own, finds himself involved in a politico-sociological drama the rules of which are obscure or non-existent and the precise stage of development of which is difficult to define.

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Soon after his release, "remoulded", or so his captors thought, he came to England to write this book, leaving his wife and children behind in Hong Kong. To this day he does not know if he will ever see them again—for him there is no return.
March 25s

1724

Longmans

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To add to the difficulty, the tool with which we try to arrive at a definition is language, a phenomenon which still remains largely unexplained and is itself a product of the confusions of history. If we are too clearly aware of this, we may find ourselves living, as Valéry did for long stretches, in a state of sterile neurotic vibration. Ultimately, he was a Nihilistic-Anarchistic mystic, because, in his highest moments, he found himself in a Cloud of Unknowing, in relation to which any intelligible statement represented a descent into falsehood and impurity. Sometimes the sojourn in the Cloud of Unknowing could be a serene form of union with nothingness outside time (this is why Valéry has been called a Buddhist, and why he dubbed himself "a mystic without God"); sometimes it was acedia and the dark night of the intellect.

ON THE PRACTICAL LEVEL, strangely enough, Valéry had two very different forms of behaviour. He was a typical petty bourgeois Frenchman, outwardly respectable, ceremonious in behaviour, rather reactionary, something of a snob, nationalistic (even a chauvinist, as his son, François, points out in his interesting preface to this volume), and with a traditional eye for the ladies. Later, when he became famous, he was a supporter of worthy international causes, such as European Intellectual Co-operation, but nothing he says about them has any of the appositeness or bite of his genuinely personal writings. It seems to me that his social and political thought was far too bleak and intransigent to be compatible with any definite political action; he chose to behave like a respectable bourgeois, because outward conformity was perfectly compatible with inward anarchism; like Descartes, he observed the social gestures, while thinking his own thoughts. When he realised that he had achieved European standing, he again made appropriate gestures, but by that time he was too old, too discouraged, too fundamentally pessimistic, to act effectively, or even to reflect positively on the problems of action.

His social thought, as contained in this volume and as scattered throughout his *Cahiers*, is then no more than a negative introduction, a savage clearing of the ground, an exasperated challenging of all assumptions, which leaves the problem of living in society unsolved. Perhaps it is an insoluble problem, but whether it is or not, Valéry's bitter, fragmentary stabs at the truth can seem more encouraging than some facile treatises.

J. G. Weightman

Novels

Fowler's Snare. By JENNIFER DAWSON. *Anthony Blond*, 18s.

As Far As You Can Go. By JULIAN MITCHELL. *Constable*, 21s.

A Favourite of the Gods. By SYBILLE BEDFORD. *Collins*, 18s.

The Thin Red Line. By JAMES JONES. *Collins*, 25s.

A Prayer for the Brethren. By MLADEN OLJAČA. Translated by ALEC BROWN. *Hutchinson*, 21s.

ENGLISH REVIEWERS seldom say what novels are about. Of course, they often tell you the plot, if any, but they rarely discuss or try to estimate the author's underlying assumptions or values, or his attitudes towards the human condition. This is partly because they feel that their opinion about the book's readability rates more space: but quite often too, I believe, it is because they are afraid of falling out of the battered frying-pan of art-for-art's-sake, into the dim but smouldering fire of social realism. And many more do not think that moral outlook, fundamental attitude to existence, really matters: it takes all sorts of novelists, they assume, to make, or invent, a world.

Yet more and more this kind of evaluation is needed. Novelists who can be regarded at all seriously cannot help writing about either manners or morals: they are either trying to give a picture as authentic as they can make it, of contemporary life as it goes on, or they are trying to grow a personal imaginative vision, also as authentic as possible.

But even novels of manners are all the better if they show some signs that the author is trying to develop this personal vision which at last becomes disinterested and therefore capable of objective valuation. In the end, the alternative to this universalising attempt is, more or less obviously, some sort of egoistic belly-aching.

All these authors write well. Nowadays there seems to be a standard below which nobody can afford to fall: and that is a further reason for looking for another criterion of merit. Miss Jennifer Dawson writes with such sharp imaginative perception that she gave me a morning's acute pleasure which it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge: if the face of the visual world can be cleaned up as well as this, it is worth looking at. She seems indeed to be more of a poet than a novelist at present, and one does not see how the fusion between the poet and the novelist is to be made. Her story is about Joanna Hillery, and Joanna's fellow university student and boy-friend David, a decent, high-minded, sexually-inhibited bore, with some of her family background at week-ends. The awful

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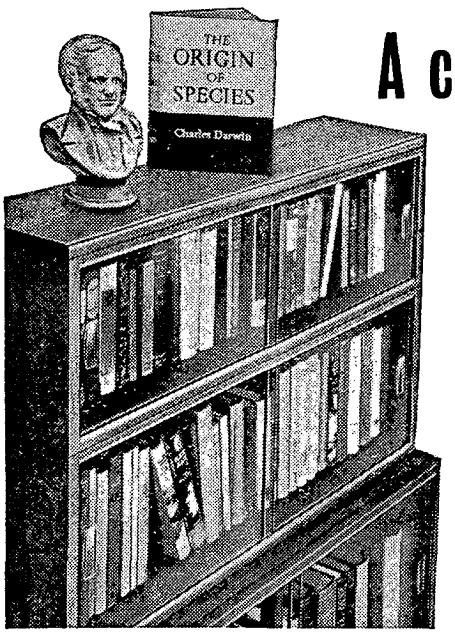

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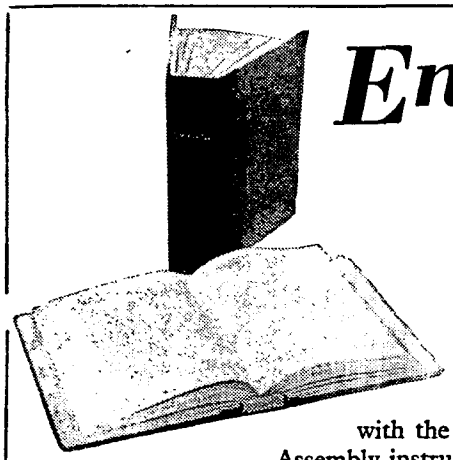
relationship between Dike, her father, born weak and elderly, and Dora, her mother, is observed with wit and penetration. Dora is an intellectual Mrs. Jellaby, wholly devoted to archæological "digs," meanwhile dominating her husband—whose life has been a long struggle to preserve the merest identity—with the utmost rectitude. The book nevertheless illustrates my thesis, in falling to bits between the two stools of observation and vision. It is about contemporary *mœurs*, with the author fumbling for a meaning in them. And without at least an intuitive sense of meaning, an author does not know where or how to look at what he observes. This becomes clearer when, frozen stiff by the bore David's emotional clumsiness, Joanna falls into the bed, really much colder, of Bric Tuldy, a professionally sexy American post-graduate student. Somewhere he probably exists: but I have a strong feeling that here he is a Humour, an eccentric, brought in to fill up the chart of contemporary behaviour. Where then do we go from here? At the end, Joanna is still pining to get away from "things, things, things": but she appears to adapt—or resign—herself to David.

In Mr. Julian Mitchell's *As Far As You Can Go*, the unquiet American turns up again; disquieting too; one hopes that this is not to become prescribed characterisation. Mr. Mitchell's book to be sure takes place mostly in America. It is sad that so many novelists at a formative age are driven or lured away from their local habitation. Mr. Mitchell is good on American landscape and it is here that the real power and feeling of the book lies. I will not suggest that he ought to write travel books instead of novels, because the earlier part in a London bill-broker's office is very well done: and it strongly suggests that where there is no other central vision for dealing with the description of "manners," satire is still the best. But when instead of describing what he knows minutely, even automatically, Mr. Mitchell has to rely on the unifying powers of his imagination, he breaks down. He also asks us to take a lot of matters more seriously than they deserve. For instance, the unquiet American, Eddy Jackson, like Miss Dawson's Bric a great preacher about free-life-and-love, also a great delinquent, car-stealer, and criminal saint, is put before us most of the time, as a wonderful person, not only by his waiter boy-friend, Chuck, but by Harold the hero. To show this he writes an extremely bad poem, unfortunately given in full. After having killed himself, quite unnecessarily, in a stolen car, he finishes up with his testicles cut off, by a



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gang. About this we are supposed to cry—a situation no serious literature has ever expected us to take without laughing.

There is another notable old eccentric, Mrs. Washburn, rich grandmother, witchlike in temper if not in appearance, of Harold's American girl-friend, Diane (who finally becomes emotionally unsatisfactory because she is grandmother-fixated). Very odd: and should set somebody off on a new case-book.

Harold meets this lot on his very *ad hoc* pilgrimage to the States to collect some family portraits for a rich man who wants to buy back his lineage. I am sure, indeed I see, that Mr. Mitchell can write, certainly he can describe. But he had better stay just funny at present if he does not want to become sentimental and false, and if he wants to produce more than a collection of ingredients. Harold says: "I want to show the next man that I'm better than he is. Maybe that outlook has something to do with it.

THE OTHER THREE BOOKS are either about, or have something to do with, the wars. In Mrs. Bedford's *A Favourite of the Gods*, World War I is not much more than a convenient timing-system: apart from that a disruption of private international contacts, and a force that drives into bed well-brought-up girls who would otherwise have never thought of such a thing. It also provides smart officer escorts and even one cynical and charming battle-dodger who knew from the beginning that it was all phoney. Now this book too is very well written, very adequately written for Mrs. Bedford's main purpose which seems to be clever time-pastiche. Anna, rich, New England, and puritanical, marries an Italian *principe*, is appalled by his late-discovered infidelity, and flees to England and another kind of glossy social life, with her young daughter Constanza. Because the reasons which made her mother leave her father have always remained mysterious to Constanza she has been kept in divided loyalties and uncertainty of judgment about her own life. She too makes an unsuccessful marriage which also produces a daughter. Quite allowably, the three are all very much alike. But the most important reason for their resemblance is that Mrs. Bedford wants to produce a solidly enamelled social surface—the glossy world for which she feels nostalgia: department of belly-aching therefore rather than of vision. The book is full of gracious living. An unlikely tough quotes Rimbaud, and there are brief discussions on the wines one ought to drink.

James Jones' novel is an immensely solid and painstaking study of the American army in Guadalcanal. A group rather than any individual is the unit of description—a platoon growing up from "cannon-fodder" to veterans, the growth including a number of deaths. Mr. Jones, heaven help us, also writes well: his jungle descriptions are excellent. But painstaking is the word. I do not mean that the book could have been shorter: it is a kind of tapestry with a definite repetition of pattern. And he is trying to write a naïve Iliad (including making his people recognisable by label-characteristics). He spares us no realistic details —all the wounds, all the stinks, and the exact supply of monotonous monosyllables are there. The account of strategy and tactics is an integral part of the story too. All this takes time. He enjoys writing this inset military manual: and because he suggests that his original scum get something out of their experiences, some development and virtue, which they would otherwise not have achieved, the final impression is what he did not consciously intend—pro-war.

I STICK TO Wilfred Owen: the poetry *is* in the pity: in the individual's tragic feeling, the individual's sense that the race has got itself into this helpless mess, for which we are all still responsible. Mr. Oljača has this sense, and so his book strikes me as more true, vivid, and absorbing than the others on the list. Its war-horrors—weight for weight they rival Mr. Jones's—are alive and kicking, while Mr. Jones's resemble a neat butcher's chart. It is a very remarkable book too, to come from behind the Iron Curtain. What it says is that a man needs to love, and that being taught to murder even in the cause of freedom, will only teach him the contrary.

Kathleen Nott

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The Doctor who wrote this letter has given us special permission to publish it.

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LETTERS

Lowenthal's Khrushchev

MR. KHRUSHCHEV's missiles in Cuba have provided Sovietologists with a lot of good clean fun, and Mr. Lowenthal's ("After Cuba, Berlin?" ENCOUNTER, December, 1962) explanations of his motives are as interesting as any.

But I would like to take up two of his points. He says (p. 49) that in the Soviet view "Western European Unity has to be disrupted quickly if it is to be stopped at all. It is thus hardly an accident that the pressure on Berlin has been stepped up at the very time when Soviet and international Communist leaders are beginning to argue whether the unity of Western Europe must be accepted as an accomplished fact." In the September, 1962, issue of *World Marxist Review*, in an article entitled "Vital Questions of the Development of the Socialist World System," Mr. Khrushchev writes:

> The Communists are combating the attempts to use the Common Market and other amalgamations of this kind for the purpose of preparing another war and of intensifying the armaments drive, for purposes of exerting economic and political pressure on other countries and especially on the newly-emergent states. We have exposed and we shall continue to expose the dangerous consequences of the capitalist integration for the working people.
>
> At the same time we take cognisance of the objective trend towards internationalisation of production which can be observed in the capitalist world and, in keeping with this, we are designing our own policy and our own economic measures. And this brings us to the question of the possibility of economic co-operation and peaceful economic competition not only between the separate countries with differing social systems, but also between their economic amalgamations.

Mr. Khrushchev seems to be *accepting* the Common Market as an economic amalgamation, and as a candidate for "peaceful economic competition, while at the same time expressing distaste for its possible "dangerous consequences."

Mr. Lowenthal also writes: "His latest adventure is beginning to convince some of the former Western admirers of Khrushchev's version of 'peaceful co-existence' that he does not, after all, share their desire for 'stability.'" This idea of stability needs watching very carefully. We are in the middle of an arms race, which can be pictured perhaps as a series of break-throughs, and overtakings, and catchings-up, with very occasional and very temporary plateaux of stability. The last break-through before Cuba had been American; the large-scale production and deployment of *Minuteman*, which already (with the order nowhere near complete) gives the Americans a huge preponderance of ICBMs over the Russians. (The I.S.S. gives the following estimate of ICBMs for early 1963: Western Alliances, 450–500; Soviet Bloc, 75+). Add Western MRBMs based within range of the Soviet Union, and the picture could not possibly look *stable* to the Russians. Indeed an attempt to redress the imbalance by means of a geographical break-through, could in terms of overall balance and general stability be thought of by keen stabilisers as a stabilising gesture. We should also realise that the West's ordering some 1,600 or 1,700 missiles (Minuteman and Polaris) can count as a "deliberately created crisis." Mr. Khrushchev would not be showing responsibility to his own country if he were any less alarmed by this than the American Administration was by the appearance of Sputnik I. Sputnik persuaded them to make a geographical break-through by putting Thors and Jupiters into Europe.

ELIZABETH YOUNG

London

THE KHRUSHCHEV ARTICLE quoted by Mrs. Young was part of the basis of my argument, and I fail to see where it leads her to disagree with me. The Soviets primarily fear West European political consolidation; they dislike the Common Market's economic success both in itself and because it might strengthen political unity. The more they are forced to face the economic fact, the more urgent does it seem to them to forestall the "dangerous consequences." That is what I said, what Khrushchev implies, and what Mrs. Young seems to repeat in slightly different words. By contrast, we really do differ about "stability." I hold that the arms race is a function of political aims and not vice-versa. Ever since the *sputniks*, Khrushchev has felt that the relation of forces would now enable him to make major political advances in contested areas without major risk. In the formula adopted at the Moscow conference of Communist parties in 1960 (and repeated in the 1961 programme of the CPSU), he has believed that the "general crisis of capitalism" has entered a "third stage," comparable with the first stage at the end of World War I (from which emerged the Soviet Union) and the second stage following World War II (in which Eastern Europe and China came under Communist rule). The *sputniks* were "alarming" in connection with this concept of a political world-wide political offensive; the placing of Thors and Jupiters into Europe was an expedient of doubtful value but certainly no "geographical break-through" as U.S. bomber bases had existed in the same countries before; nor did the Soviets view it as such a break-through. The serious American military response to the offensive pursued by Khrushchev by a mixture of nuclear diplomacy and support for "wars of liberation" was on one side the ICBM effort that is now bearing fruit, and on the other the increase in conventional and guerrilla forces.

If Khrushchev should now conclude that his anouncement of the "third stage of the general crisis of capitalism" was premature, that his offensive has been futile, costly, and risky, and that a

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period of stability would after all be preferable, such a changed political outlook would in my opinion also produce a new attitude to the arms race on both sides, and improve the prospects of reducing its inherent risks about which Mrs. Young is rightly concerned.

RICHARD LOWENTHAL

Free University, Berlin

Europe and Asia

MR. PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE, one of the intellectuals/scholars/writers (cross out if not applicable) who contributed to your symposium "Going Into Europe," believes that Britain and Europe are hated in Asia.

This rather sweeping statement makes me wonder for how long Mr. Worsthorne lived in Asia.

Is it possible that even Europe has its share of people afflicted with persecution-mania?

M. YOGANANTHAN

Manchester

The Week of Cuba That Was

WE DO NOT think your damning summary of the British Press's wobbly reactions to the recent Cuban crisis does justice to the *Sunday Telegraph*'s firm and consistent stand throughout this dangerous situation. On October 14th, a week before President Kennedy revealed the establishment of Russian missile bases, we carried a leader page article by Peregrine Worsthorne which stated:

> ... It is imperative that America's allies should not encourage the Soviet Union to imagine that Washington is out of step with the rest of the free world on the Cuban issue.... It would be unfortunate if this illusion prompted the Russians to take one step too many, such as actually setting up a rocket base on Cuban soil.

On October 28th, the Sunday after the quarantine had been imposed, we carried a leading article which stated:

> Fear and confusion about Cuba have set walking the ghost of appeasement. Still faint in voice and furtive in movement, it is recognised by the over-forties but not by the young sixth-formers who parade the streets and denounce the American blockade. The face of appeasement is now Lord Russell's, but the clothes are those of Mr. Chamberlain.

And the following week our special correspondent in Washington sent a dispatch which we printed on the leader page stating:

> When I arrived in Washington at the height of the Cuban crisis and read reports in the American Press of half-hearted British backing, I could not refrain from murmuring: "Gentlemen in England now abed shall think themselves accursed they were not here; and hold their manhoods cheap." For undoubtedly President Kennedy was fighting one of the most momentous battles in history, the entire free world's St. Crispin's day.

In brief, the *Sunday Telegraph* advocated British backing for the United States before, during, and after the Cuban confrontation—a unique record which we regret was overlooked in your otherwise all too accurate account of British Press prevarication.

DONALD MCLACHLAN
Editor

The Sunday Telegraph, London

Protest

MAY I BE ALLOWED to protest against the foolish and unjust article of Alastair Reid: "Iberian Explosion," in your September issue. It seems that this preposterous newsman has given himself the job of spreading perverted views of Spain. Never in my mind to contest the free expression of opinion. But reporting is not untested gossip and still more deliberate distortion of facts.

I wonder also about the intentions in drawing up an analogy between the proud Spain and the nauseating *Viridiana*. To reiterate the previous criticism of this picture by your J. M. Cohen and his incredible opinion that "Viridiana represents the stagnant culture of contemporary Spain?" It is simply ludicrous.

As I have no time to enter to a long examination of these pieces of "yellow press," so shocking in your otherwise qualified Review, to express to you my deep distaste only one way is left to me: not to renew my subscription.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOSÉ M. HERNÁNDEZ-SUÁREZ

Buenos Aires, Argentine

Correction

Owing to a printer's error the seventh line was left out of Harry Fainlight's poem *Morning* which we published in our December 1962 issue. It should read:

Hollow-feeling, empty of sleep and as yet
unbreakfasted,
From an already forgotten stranger's bed
I stumble out into an unfamiliar part of town.

So dazzlingly greeted! The sunlight's sudden
recognition breaking
Across a row of houses I have never seen;
These shoppers remote as if some distant generation.

World, empty of me as I am of you now,
Let me ask of you nothing.
All now seems possible. O let me nothing ask.

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New York City

WE *have been around* Partisan Review *for some time and we hear a lot of big words used, some foreign and some unitalicised. Contrary to Daniel Bell, who says in "The Fetish God of Revolution"* "tendenz—*a favoured term around* Partisan Review *these days," we have never heard anyone say* Tendenz, *and we hear everything. Occasionally a* kitsch *floats in to us, frequently* alienation, *once in a while an* Angst, *hardly ever a* hip, *and a* nouvelle vague *sometimes in a low voice. Thank you for bringing this word to our attention. P.S. William Phillips has just confessed that he did indeed use* Tendenz *once, but only as a code word for* Zeitgeist. THE NEW LEADER

Peking

ALL *Communist Party members and officials in Peking were reported to-day to be holding meetings to study a slightly revised version of a 20-year-old party document entitled "How to Be a Good Communist." The revised version differed only slightly from the original essay: some quotations from Stalin are replaced by quotations from Mao Tse-tung.* THE TIMES

Washington

IT *was Bobby Kennedy who suggested what has since been dubbed "the Trollope ploy." The Victorian novelist, Anthony Trollope, had a standard scene: a young man with no marital intentions makes some imprudent gesture toward a marriage-hungry maiden—he squeezes her hand, even kisses her. The lady instantly seizes the opportunity by shyly accepting what she chooses to interpret as a proposal of marriage.*

Robert Kennedy suggested that the President simply interpret the Friday-night Khrushchev letter as a proposal for an acceptable Cuba deal, ignoring all the other implications. The President agreed.

"If I understand you correctly . . ." he wrote, then the deal was on. If Khrushchev would remove his offensive weapons from Cuba, under suitable conditions, the blockade would end, and Cuba would not be invaded.

SATURDAY EVENING POST

New York

KEYNES *succeeded in reforming our economic system through melioration and compromise, for politics, as we are always told, is the art of the possible. But art is the politics of the impossible, and compromise is not enough. What Broadway needs is not a Keynes but a Marx—not one who will trim his toe-nails but one who will lop off its malignant limbs.*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Leeds

ALTHOUGH *several teachers claimed that there was an indifference or hostility to cultural interests, most students when asked about this declared that it was true only of faculties other than their own. Several said they did not like culture as purveyed by "literary gents" and they thought the B.B.C. and the British Council were at fault in this respect. A teacher taking part in one discussion on this subject said that students with such views often felt no inhibitions about applying for jobs with these organisations, and this was generally agreed. Applied science and engineering were often selected as faculties where cultural pursuits did not extend beyond "television and Saturday night binges in the union."* THE TIMES

London

THE *quarrel still smoulders: In 1958 the Archbishop of Dublin said he would refuse to let any priest celebrate a votive Mass for the Dublin festival if any work by O'Casey or Joyce were performed there. O'Casey has since banned his plays from Ireland.*

"The implication was," said O'Casey, "that a play by O'Casey or Joyce was an insult to Christ. I think that's a damned impudent and slanderous thing to say about an artist. I couldn't stick that at all." DAILY MAIL

IN *Princeton, Wisconsin, the other day a dentist read excerpts from two pages of "1984" to the electors of the local school system. On the basis of those pages he charged that the book was "not proper reading." The group promptly voted to ban it from the school system. No one polled the electors to see how many had read the book, but the assumption must be that hardly any had. The book is widely and successfully used in high school reading courses over the country. Princeton's School Administrator Calhoun, who thinks that "banning a book isn't a subject to be brought up at a public meeting," points out that "you could read two pages from almost any book, even the Bible, and convince a crowd that the book is obscene."*

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

London

SHOULD *we take a blue pencil to the Bible? Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, the former president of the Methodist Conference, has just made a public pronouncement to the effect that we should. He wants to make a start by hacking away at the Old Testament. He would take out what he calls "the immoral bits," the "bloody massacres and smutty little pieces that choirboys read up on the quiet." The Old Testament, he says, is "out of date." We will "never win people into the churches by out of date ideas and ancient scriptures."* DAILY MAIL

Bonn

WHOEVER *mixes in U.S. university circles [writes Professor Klaus Epstein in the German weekly] concludes very soon that if he really wants to join in the conversation he had better be a regular reader of the English monthly journal* ENCOUNTER. . . . DAS PARLAMENT

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AUTHORS

Walter Z. Laqueur is the editor of *Survey* magazine in London. He is the author of several books on the Middle East and a history of the German Youth movement. His most recent contribution was "Thoughts in Red Square" (Nov. 1962). . . .

Roland Oliver, who has just returned from Ghana, *writes:* "The first International Conference of Africanists, which met recently in Accra, was without any doubt an important event. It was attended by representatives from almost all the African countries, and it marked the continent-wide abandonment of the old attitude of suspicion towards African studies, which I have described in my article. . . . It is obvious that with political independence either already achieved or at least well in sight, Africans have become suddenly aware of the need to establish their cultural identity. It is also obvious that the aims of this search are not narrowly nationalistic but rather pan-African. A Ghanaian can take pride in Zimbabwe, an Ethiopian in Timbuktu. It is certain that as a result of the courses in African studies now being established in most of the African universities Africans will learn about parts of Africa other than their own on a scale hitherto undreamt of. And in a decade or so this movement will have spread to the schools, with results that must be deeply significant for the development of a sense of African unity. . . .

"Within the strictly historical sphere the most important new development which emerged at the Conference was the progress made during the last two or three years in the collection of documents, mostly in Arabic, relating to the sub-Saharan region of West Africa. The two areas within this region where advances have been most rapid are northern Nigeria and northern Ghana, but there is every reason to suppose that the process begun here can be extended to the region as a whole. If so, the world of Arabist scholarship will be able to advance its frontiers decisively from North Africa across the Sahara desert. Most of the new evidence concerns the three centuries from the seventeenth to the nineteenth—the period for which we already have extensive European documentation for the history of the coastal regions. . . . With the appearance of these new sources of evidence for the interior, the history of West Africa may be expected to take on a completely new look within the next few years. . . ."

Raymond Williams is a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, and author of *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution*. . . . **Paul Johnson** is Assistant Editor of the *New Statesman* and the author of *The Suez War* and *Left of Centre*. . . . **Hugh Seton-Watson** is Professor of Russian History in the University of London, and author of *Neither War Nor Peace* and *The New Imperialism*. . . .

John Lehmann founded and edited *New Writing* and *Orpheus*, and was until recently editor of *The London Magazine*. Among his books are *The Whispering Gallery* and *I Am My Brother*. . . .

David Marquand is a Fellow of St. Antony's College, Oxford, and has worked on the staff of the *Guardian*. He is now writing a biography of Ramsay MacDonald. . . . **Mark Bonham Carter** is a publisher, a prominent Liberal, and a director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. . . .

Marcus Cunliffe is Professor of American History and Institutions, University of Manchester, and author of *The Literature of the United States*. . . .

George Weidenfeld is Chairman of the publishers Weidenfeld & Nicolson. . . . **Brian Crozier** is on the staff of *The Economist* and author of *The Rebels*. . . .

Bernard Levin is theatre critic for the *Daily Mail*. . . . **Robert Conquest,** poet and political writer, is Literary Editor of the *Spectator*. . . . **Nicholas Kaldor** is Reader in Economics, University of Cambridge. . . . **Sir Robert Hall,** the well-known economist, was for many years Economic Adviser to H.M. Government. . . .

Colin MacInnes is a novelist and critic. His new book, *Angus: Bard*, will be appearing shortly. . . . **Charles Fenby** is Editorial Director of the Westminster Press Provincial Newspapers. . . . **William Clark** is Director of the Overseas Development Institute. . . . **David Daiches** is Dean of the School of English and American Studies at the University of Sussex and author of the recent *Critical History of English Literature*. . . . **Desmond Donnelly** is a Labour Member of Parliament and the author of *March Wind*. . . . **C. H. Waddington** is Professor of Animal Genetics at the University of Edinburgh, and the author of *Principles of Embryology*, *The Scientific Attitude*, *The Strategy of the Genes*, and, most recently, *The Ethical Animal*. . . . **Wayland Young's** books include *The Montesi Scandal* and *Strategy for Survival*. . . . **Sebastian Haffner** was until recently the *Observer* correspondent in Germany. . . . **Alan Ross,** the Editor of *The London Magazine*, has recently published a new book of poems, *African Negatives*. . . . **Woodrow Wyatt** is a Labour Member of Parliament. Among his books are *The Peril in Our Midst* and *Distinguished for Talent*. . . . **Rayner Heppenstall,** novelist, poet, and literary critic, is on the staff of the B.B.C. . . . **Donald McLachlan** is Editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*. . . . **Richard Titmuss** is a Professor at London School of Economics and the author of *Essays on the Welfare State* and *Income Distribution and Social Change*. . . **Barbara Ward Jackson** is the well-known author, and former Foreign Editor of the *Economist*.

Jonathan Cape has recently published a new book by **C. A. R. Crosland.** In addition to a considerable number of new and previously unpublished essays *The Conservative Enemy* includes a number of articles originally printed in the pages of ENCOUNTER (among them "The Mass Media" in our November issue).

The Hebrew Myths will be published by Cassell in a book next October.

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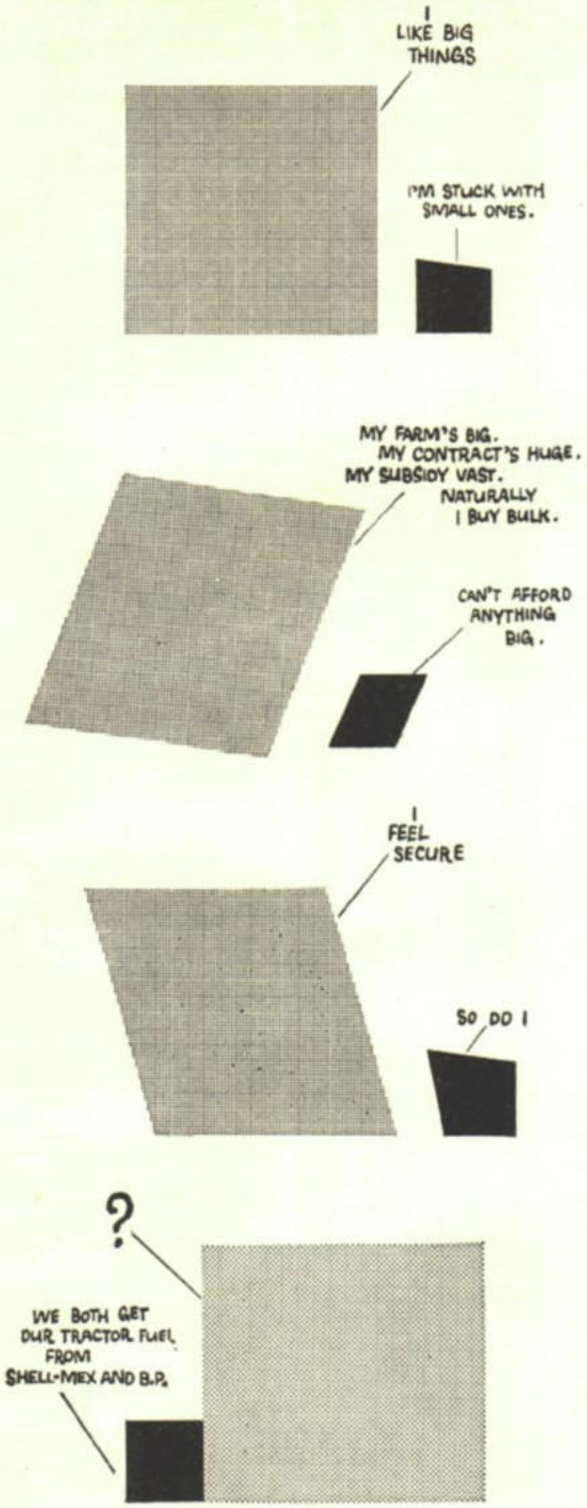

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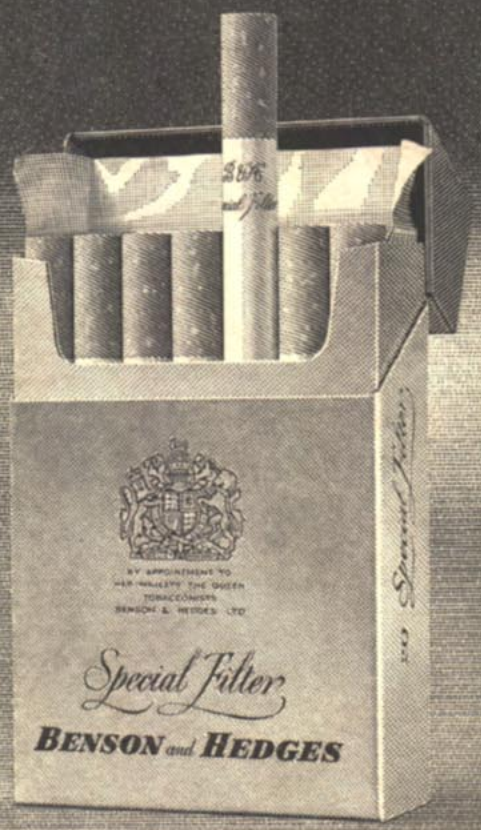

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